JOHN THOMPSON'S MODERN COURSE FOR THE PIANO

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Prelude in C major by J. S. Bach

(from *The Well-Tempered Clavier*)

The Well-Tempered Clavier is the title given to a set of Preludes and Fugues composed in all major and minor keys by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Prior to their appearance, compositions for keyboard instruments existed in but a few keys. Because of the earlier system of tuning (i.e. the pure scale) it had been impossible to play in all keys, or even to modulate from one key to another. The evolution of tuning is an involved subject and one that cannot be treated adequately here. Suffice it to say that in order to perform in all keys it was necessary to adjust or "temper" the various intervals of the scale. (Hence the origin of such terms as "tempered scale", "well-tempered clavier", etc.)

There were various systems of tuning in vogue, and Bach produced this work primarily to prove that his favored system (known as "equal temperament") gave the desired result.

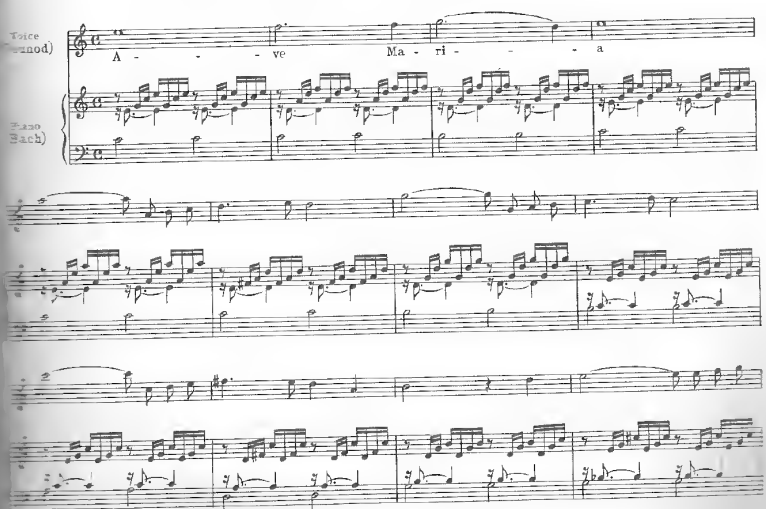
The fact that in so doing he added just so many more masterpieces to keyboard literature is a happy incident and the result of Bach's perfection as a musical architect. It is assumed that the serious student will study many of the Preludes and Fugues at a later period of his pianistic progress.

The first example in this book is the PRELUDE IN C MAJOR from the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, and it should be performed with just enough finger articulation to insure clarity, and enough of the rolling motion to acquire sparkle.

A valuable hint to interpretation: play this prelude, not as an exercise in broken chords, but as a subdued and colorful accompaniment to an *imaginary* melody. Some such idea must have inspired Gounod when he composed his famous song, "AVE MARIA", in which he uses this Bach Prelude intact *as an accompaniment* to his original melody. An extract from this famous work is shown below.

Ave Maria

Gounod's melody, to which Bach's Prelude forms the accompaniment.



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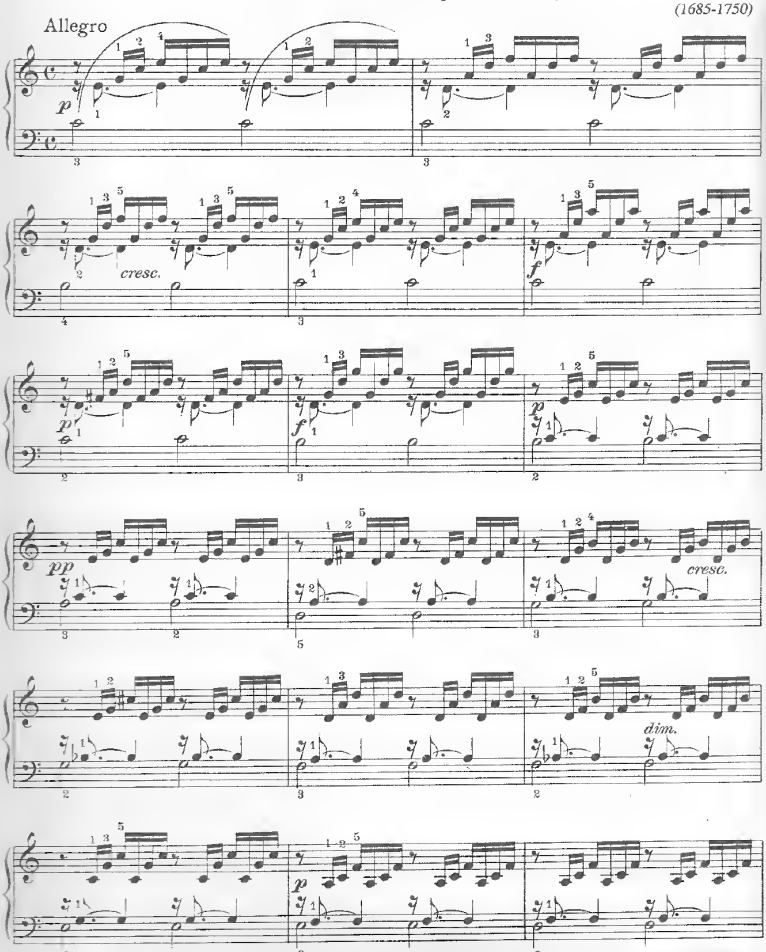
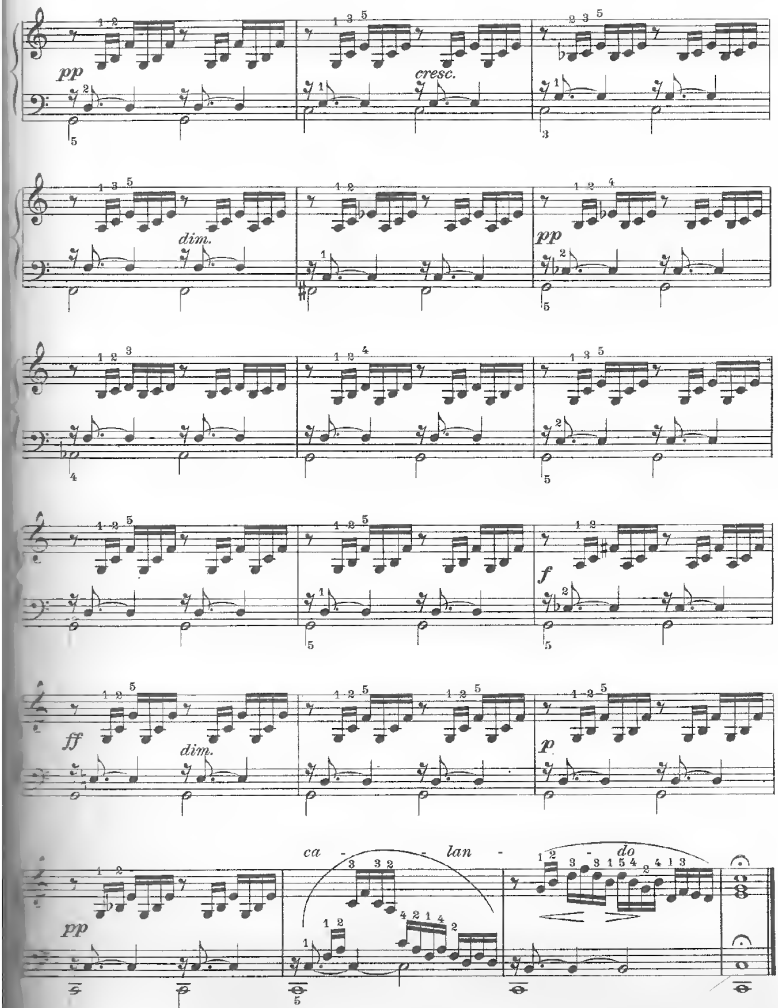
Prelude in C major

(No. 1, from *The Well-tempered Clavier*)

J. S. Bach
(1685-1750)



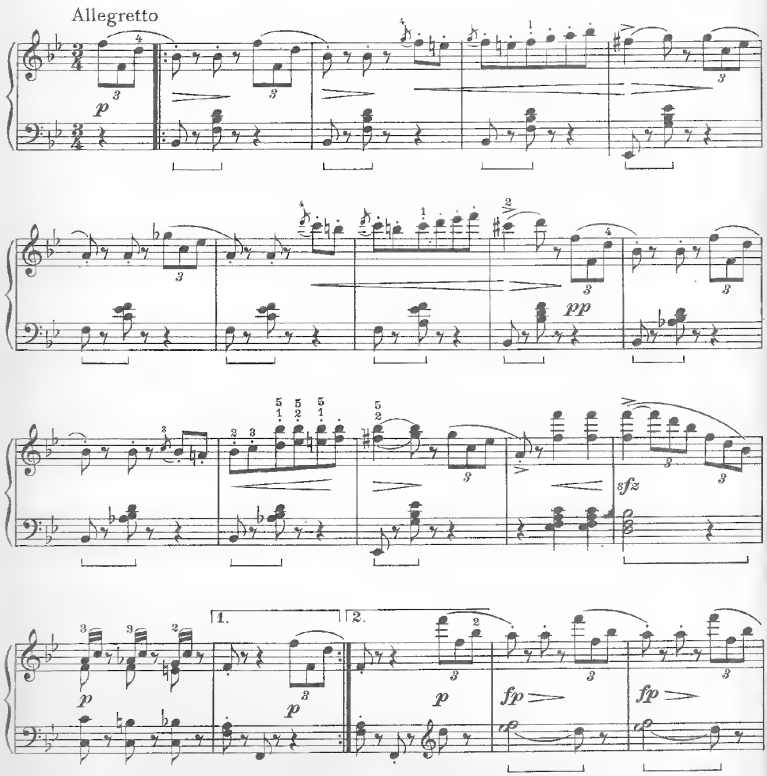

pp
cresc.
dim.
pp
f
ff
dim.
p
pp
ca - - lan -
do

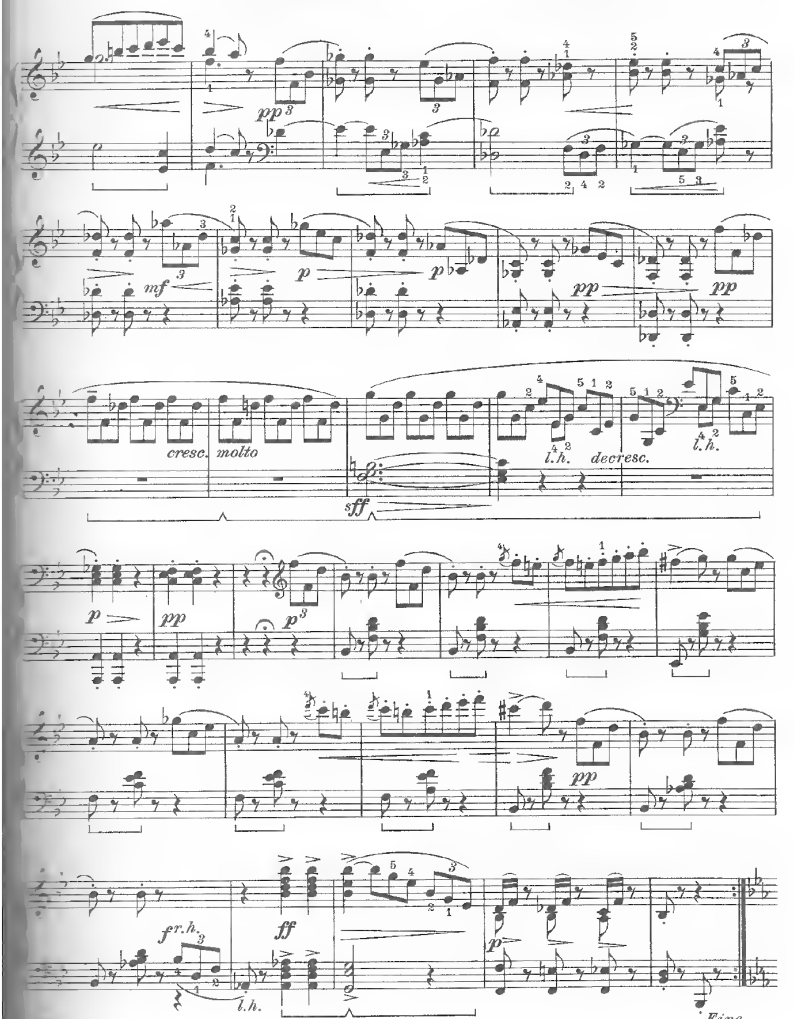
This Scherzo in B Flat was not published until after the composer's death. In mood it is light and playful and should be played with due regard for dynamics. The lyric nature of the trio section is at once apparent. Contrast between legato and staccato passages should be sharp.

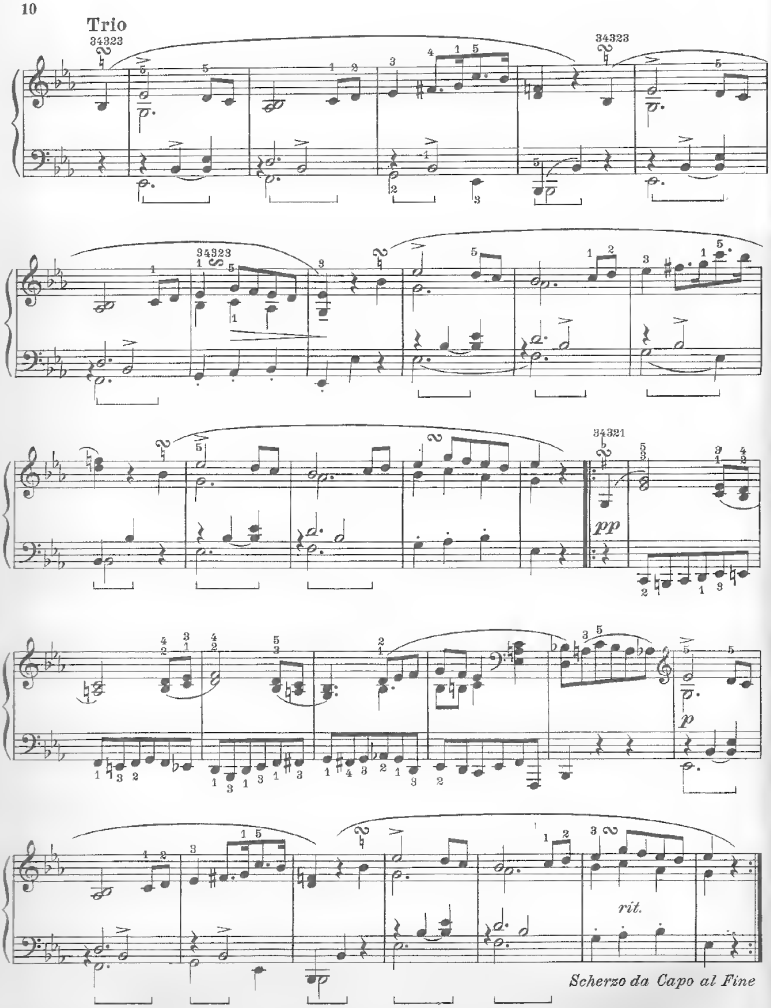
Scherzo in B♭

(Posthumous)

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)



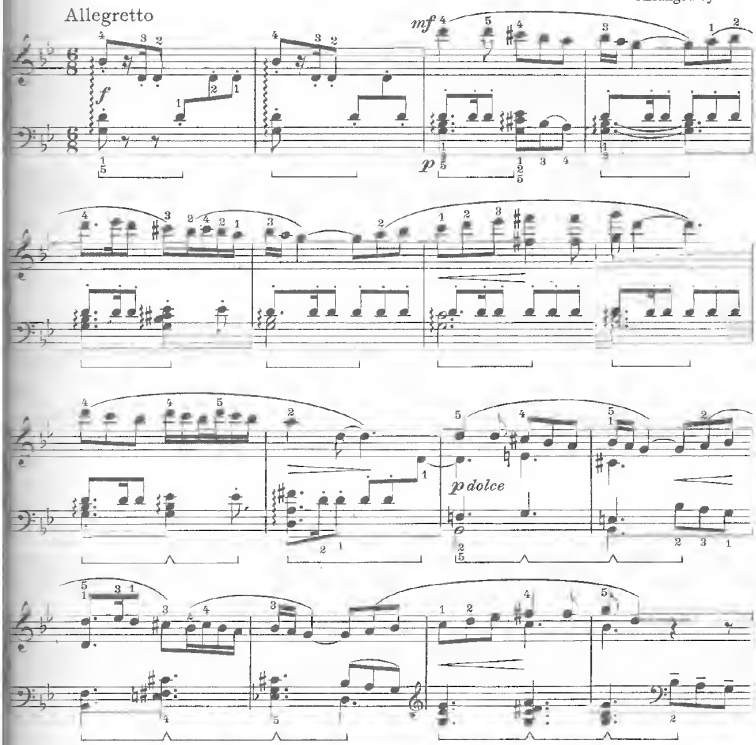

pp
mf
p
pp
pp
cresc. molto
l.h.
decresc.
l.h.
fff
p
pp
p
pp
fr.h.
ff
l.h.
p
Fine

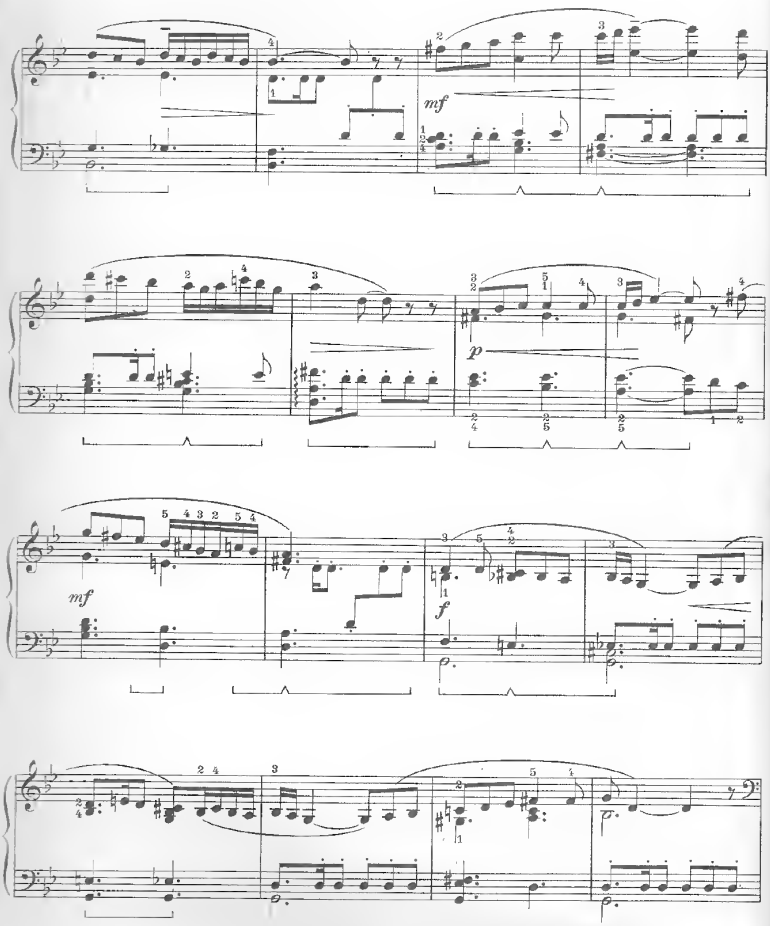

Trio
34323
34323
34323
34321
pp
p
rit.
Scherzo da Capo al Fine

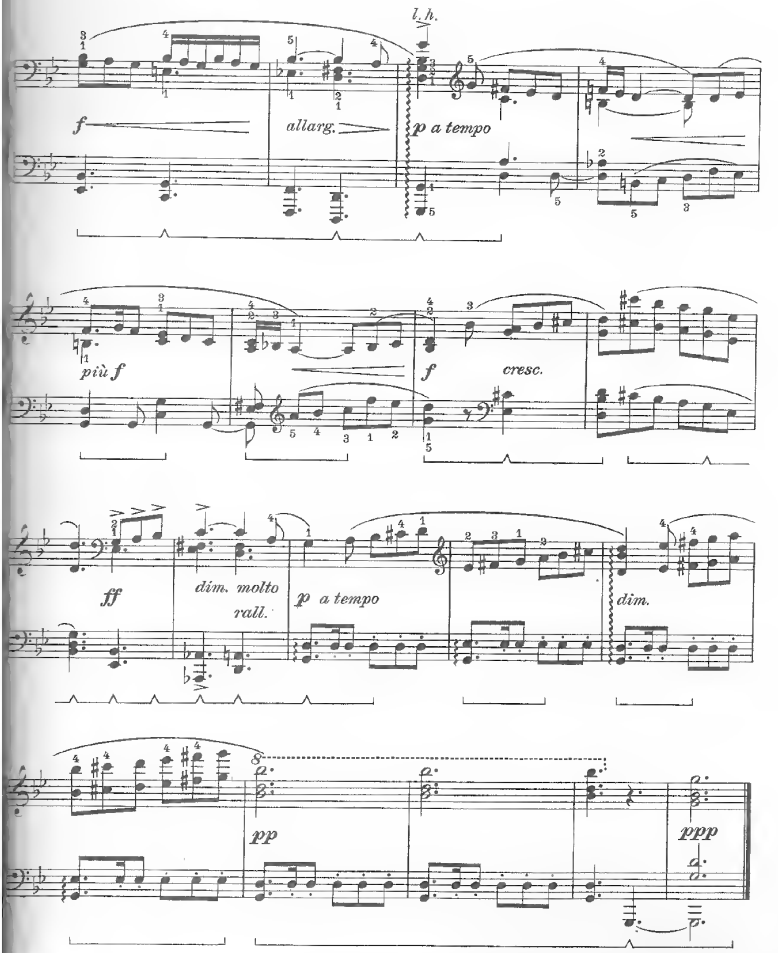
César Cui was born in Vilna in 1835. His mother was a Lithuanian and his father a French military officer—one of the many who failed to return to France during the retreat from Moscow. Young Cui showed an early aptitude for music and, even though he later followed a military career (he was recognized as an expert in fortifications), music was always his avocation. While most of his compositions were for the voice, probably his best-known single piece is the "Orientale" from a set of 24 compositions for violin, published under the name of *Kaleidoscope*. Note the striking similarity between the opening phrases of this melody and that of "Marche Slave" by Tchaikovsky. It is evident that both composers used the same folk tune as basic material.

Orientale

César Cui
(1835-1918)
Arranged by J. T.




mf
p
mf
f

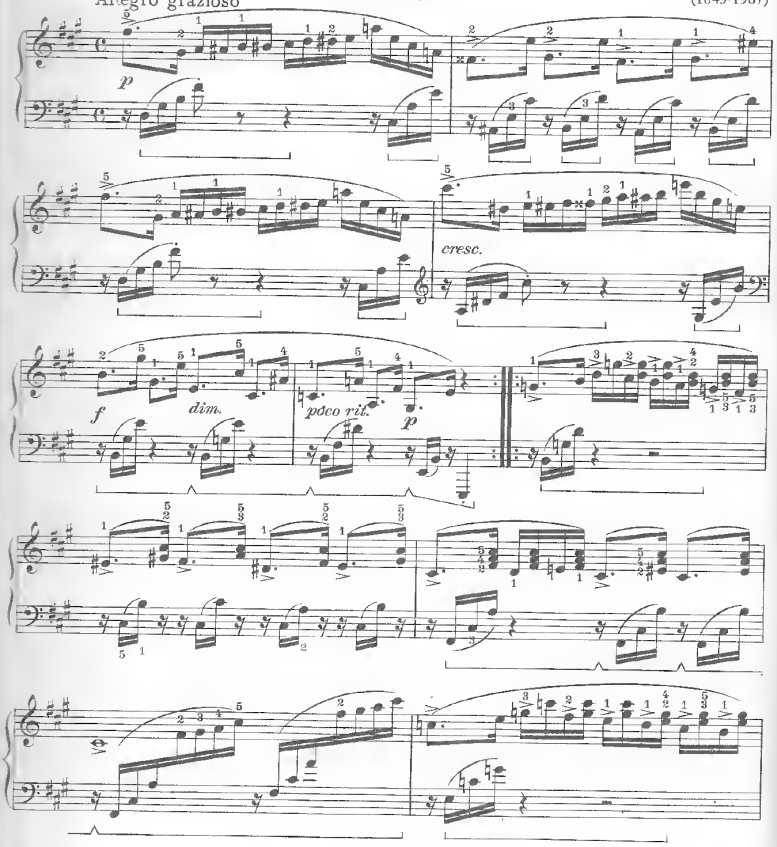

l. h.
f
allarg.
p a tempo
più f
f
cresc.
ff
dim. molto
rall.
p a tempo
dim.
pp
ppp

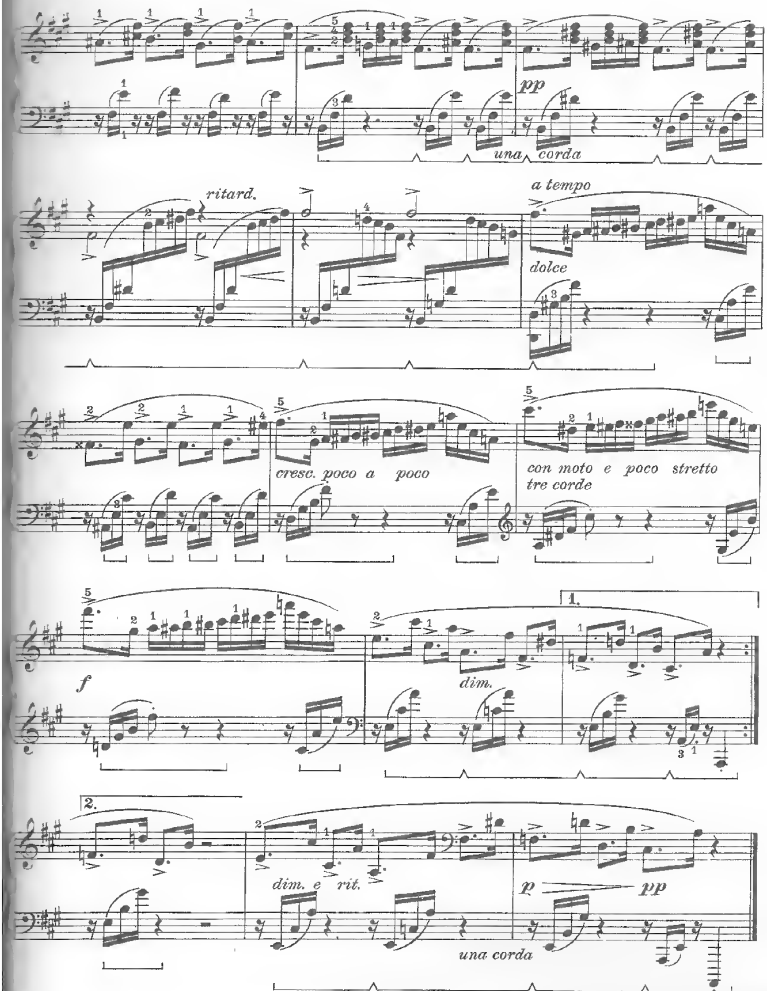
Never was a piece of music more happily named than this. Every little phrase is suggestive of the flight of butterflies in a sunny garden. Allow the fingers to literally 'flutter' over the keyboard, always, of course, with due regard for phrasing, dynamics and general accuracy. A suggestion of rubato, if well controlled, is effective. This is descriptive music. Play it as such.

Papillon

(Butterfly)

Edvard Grieg
(1843-1907)

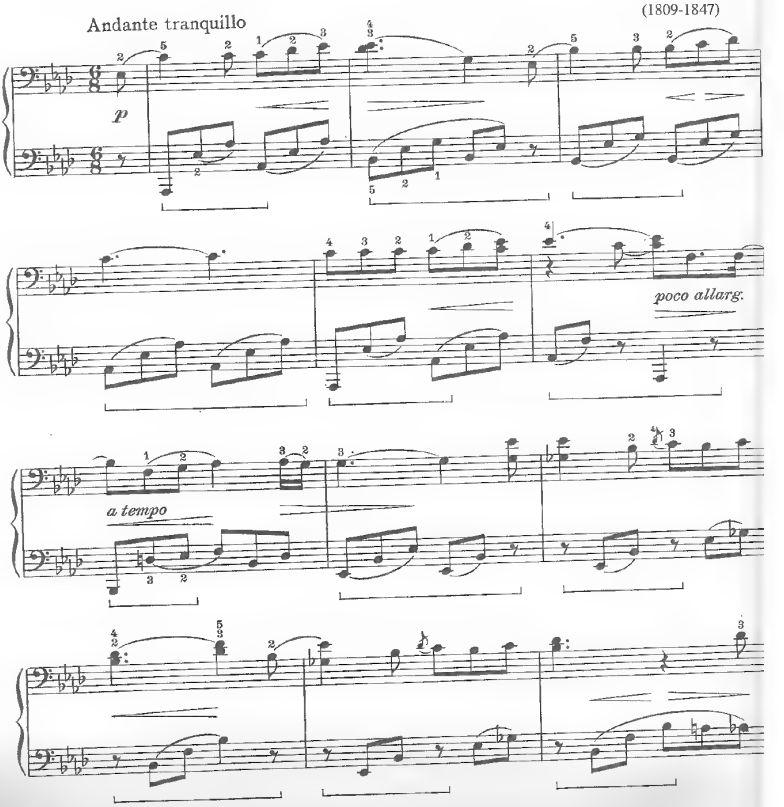


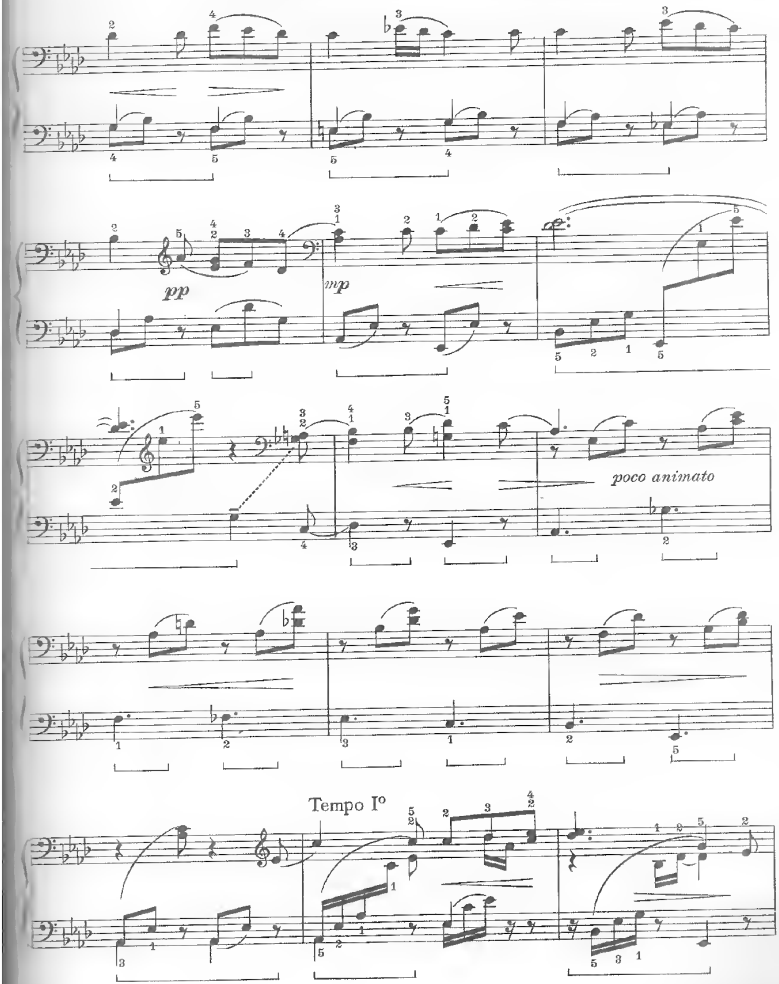

pp
una corda
ritard.
a tempo
dolce
cresc. poco a poco
con moto e poco stretto
tre corde
f
dim.
1.
2.
dim. e rit.
p
pp
una corda

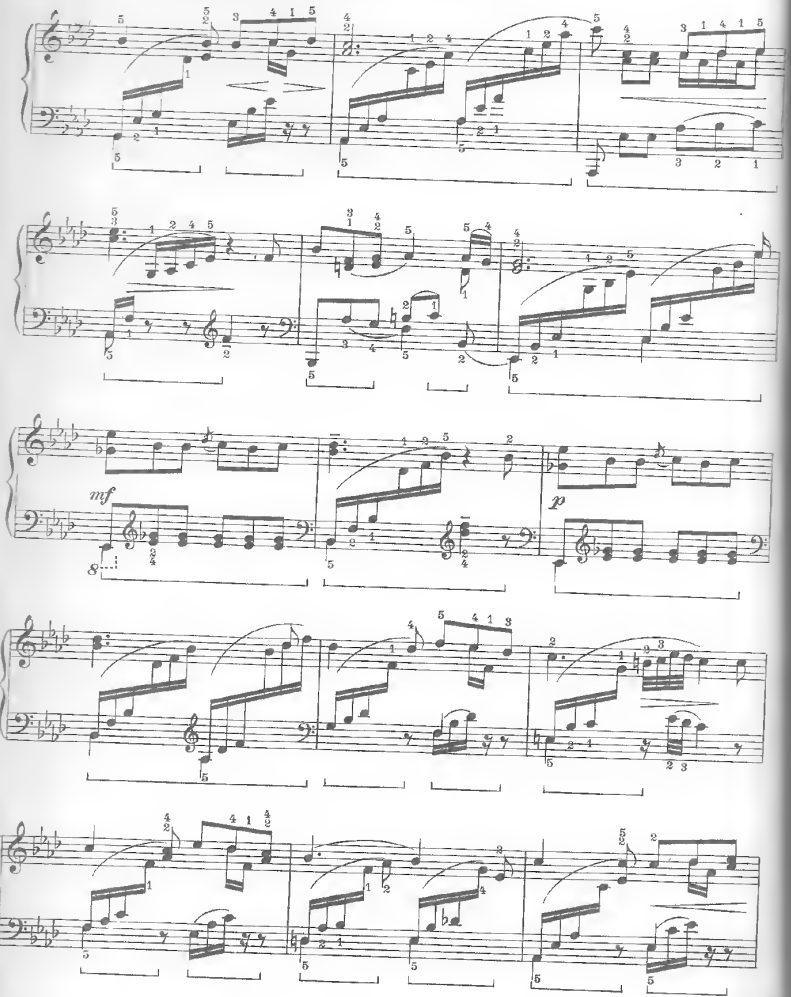
This delightful song by Mendelssohn is perennially popular, whether it be in arrangements for voice, violin or piano. It is music to be played simply but with real expression. In the second section make sure that the contrapuntal figures are not allowed to obstruct the even 'flight' of the melody.

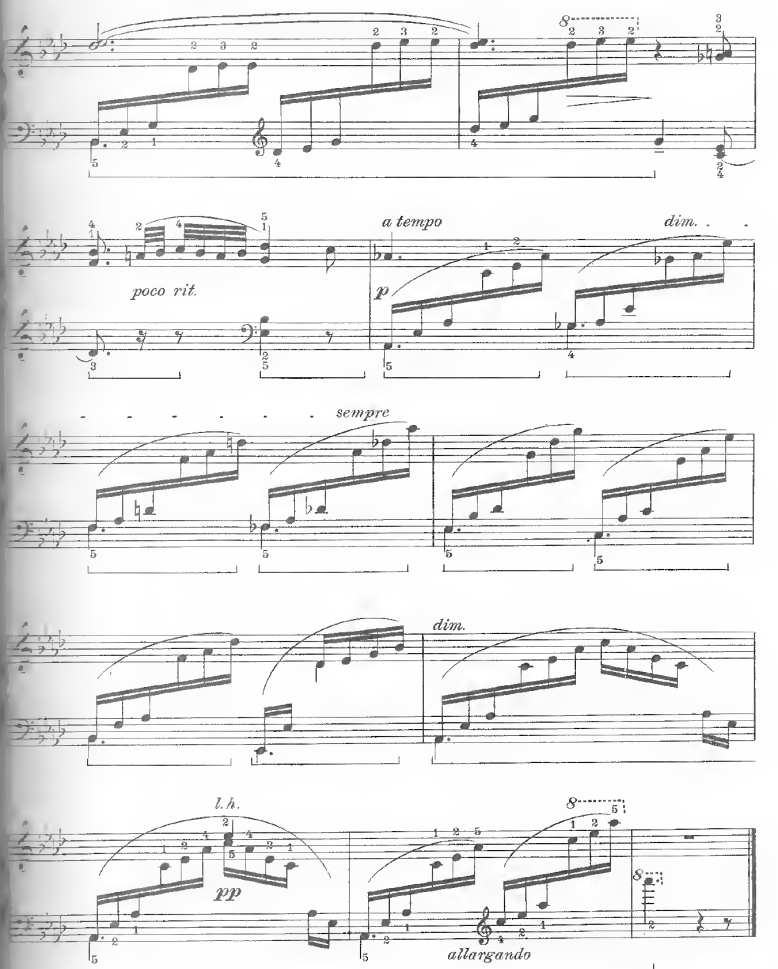
On Wings of Song

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)




pp
mp
poco animato
Tempo I°

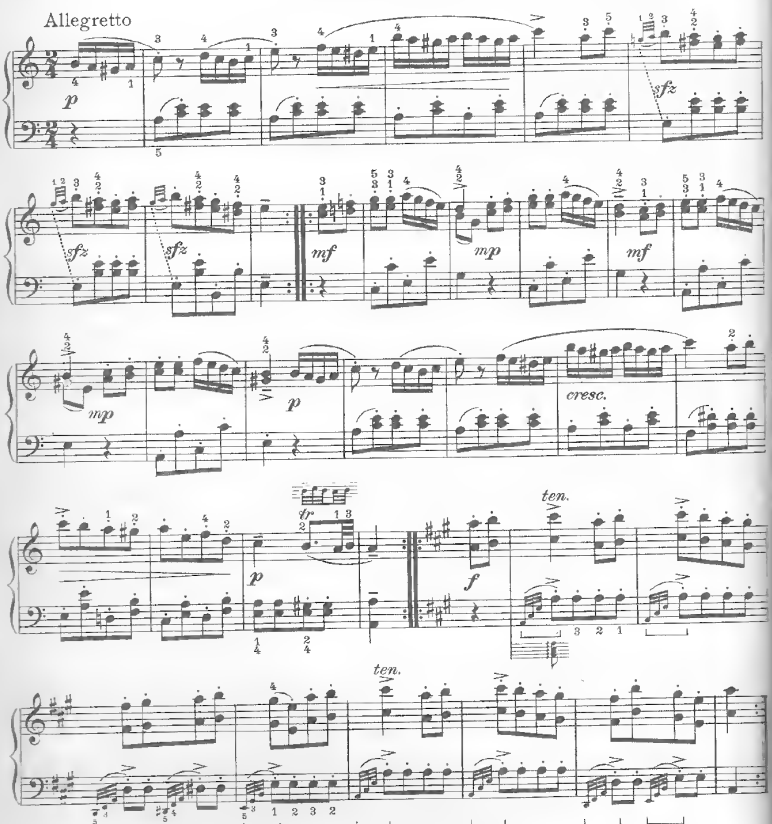

mf
p

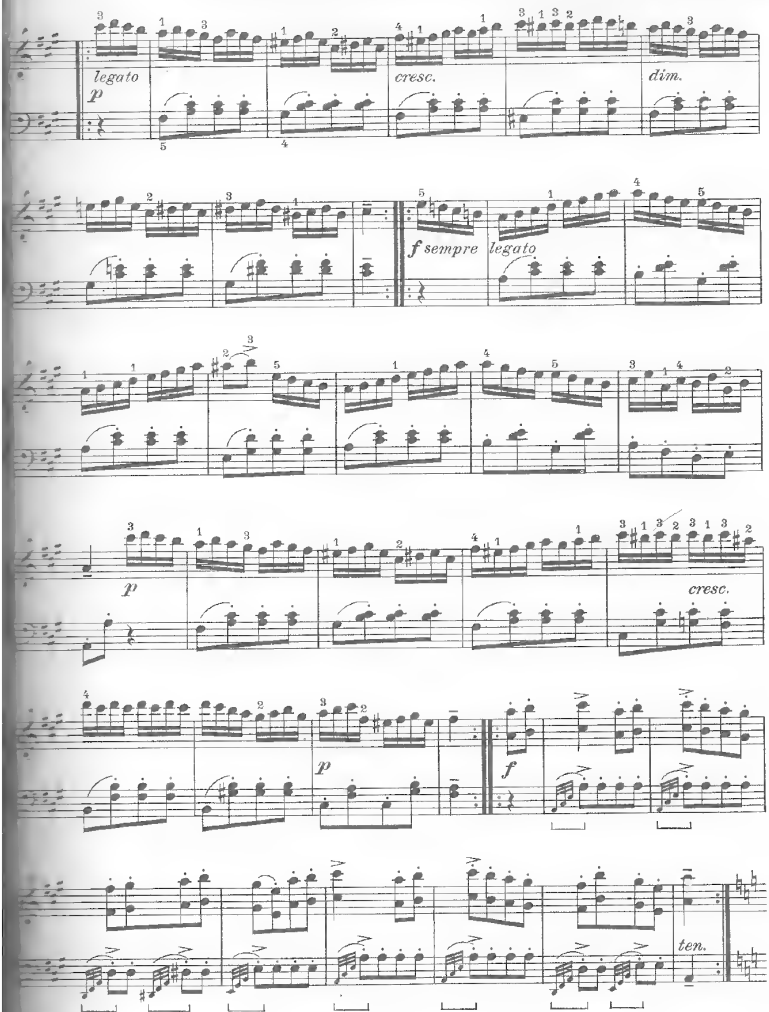

poco rit.
a tempo
dim.
p
sempre
dim.
l. h.
pp
allargando

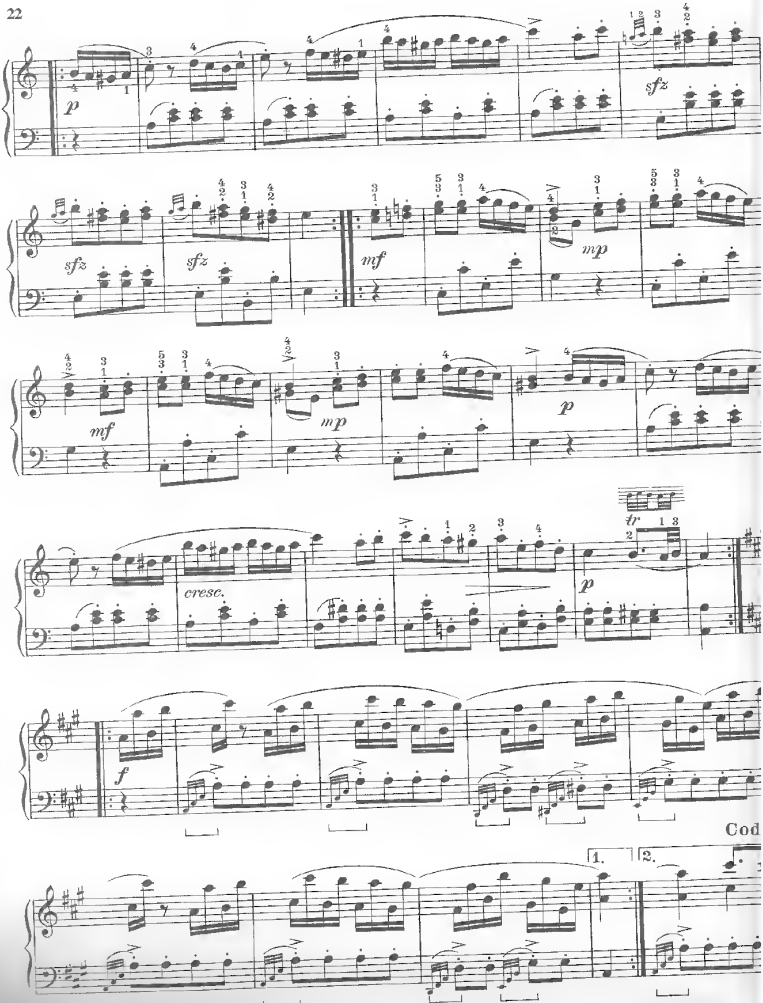
Because of a certain Oriental flavor, mild though it may seem to modern ears, Mozart himself named this number the *Turkish March*. It forms the Rondo movement of his Sonata in A major. Follow all markings in the text carefully and play with a clean, well-articulated touch.

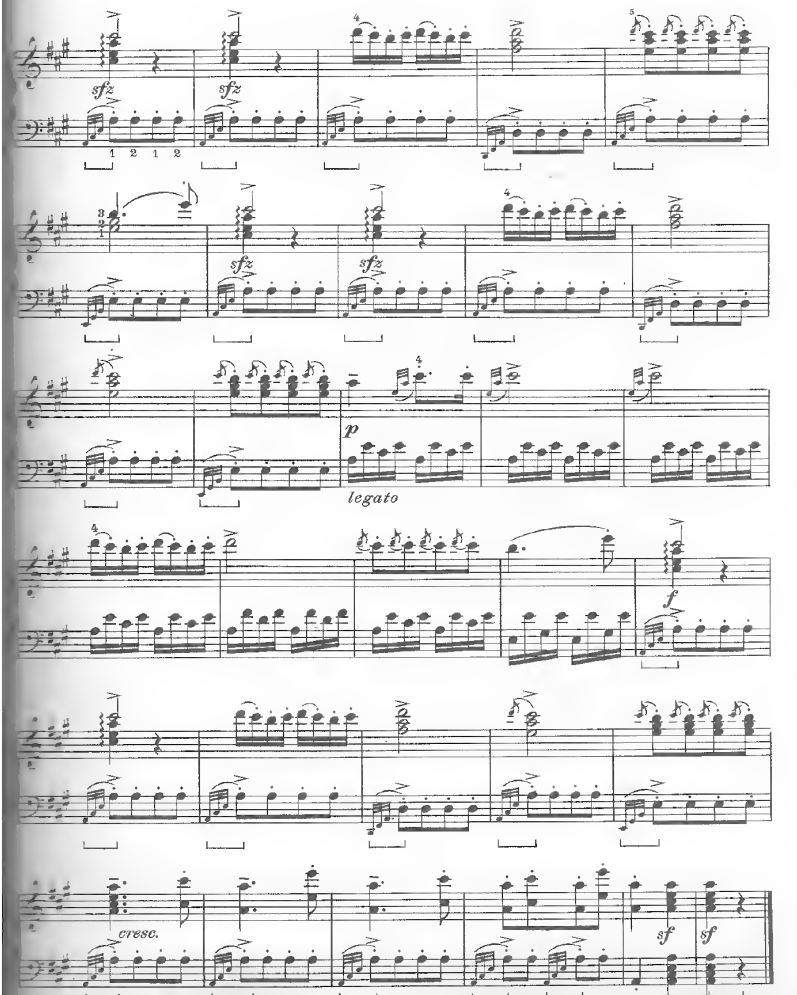
Turkish March

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)




legato
p
cresc.
dim.
f sempre legato
p
cresc.
p
f
ten.

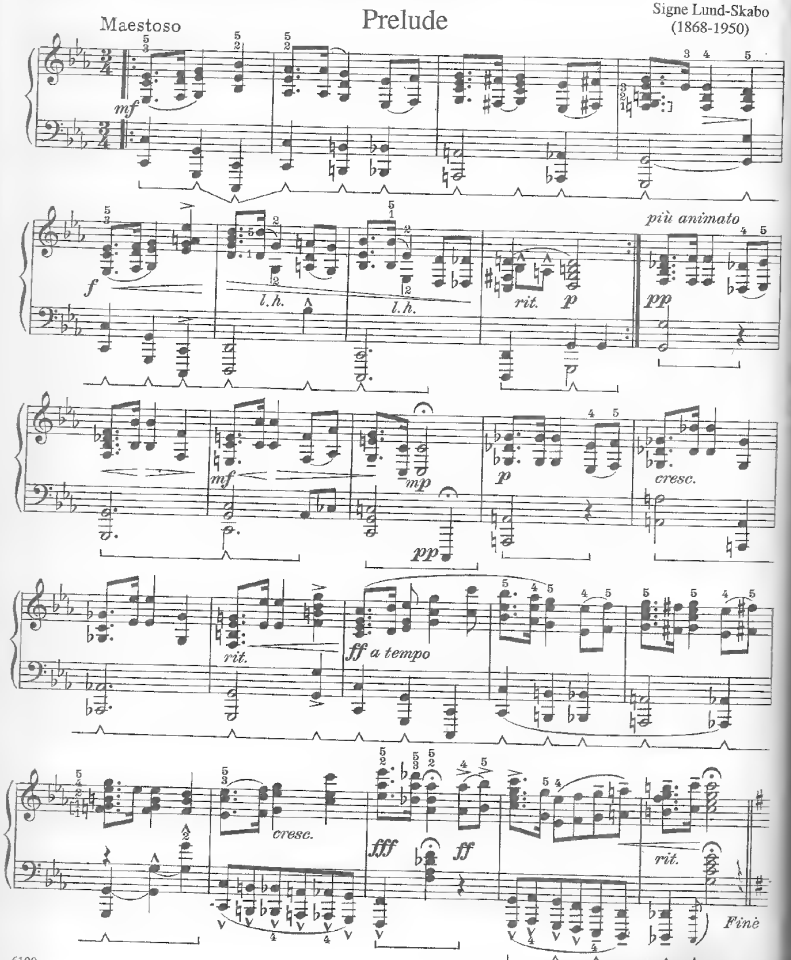

p
sfz
sfz
sfz
mf
mp
mf
mp
p
cresc.
tr
p
f
Cod
1.
2.

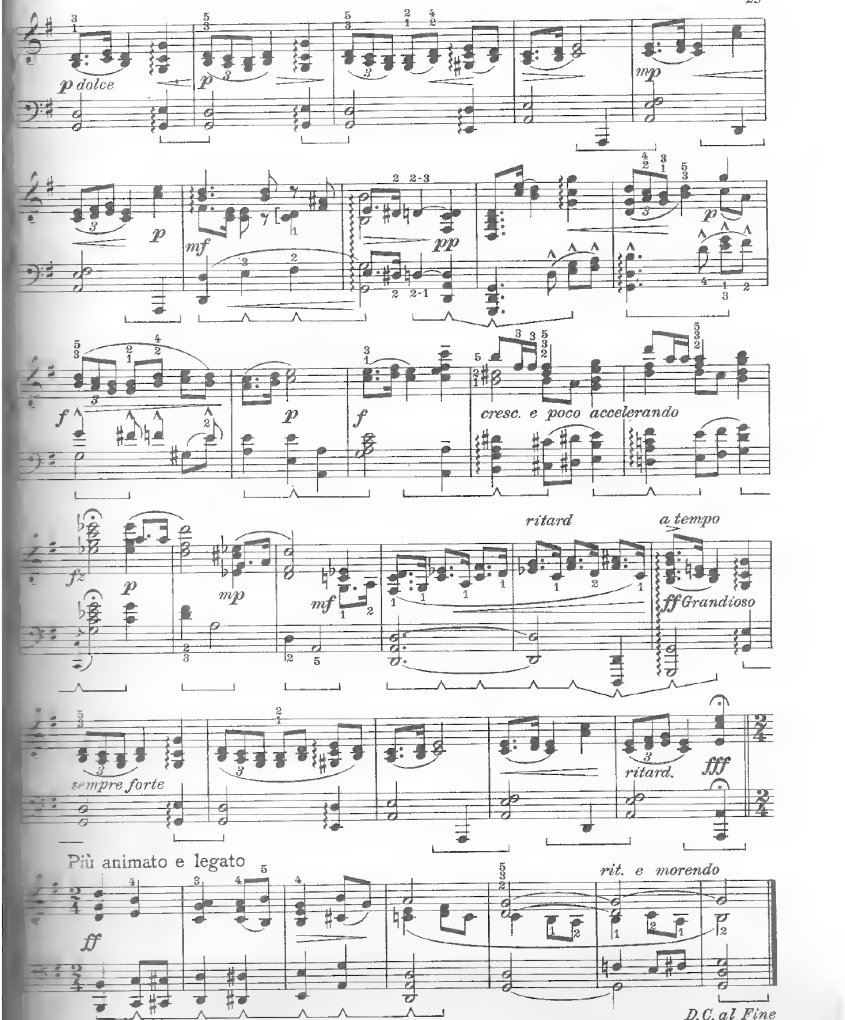

sfz
sfz
1 2 1 2
sfz
sfz
p
legato
f
cresc.
sf
sf

This Prelude, while short, is 'big' in its proportions and makes a valuable addition to the repertoire. Incidentally, it constitutes a fine exercise in free use of both arms. Use pedal with care.

Prelude

Signe Lund-Skabo
(1868-1950)



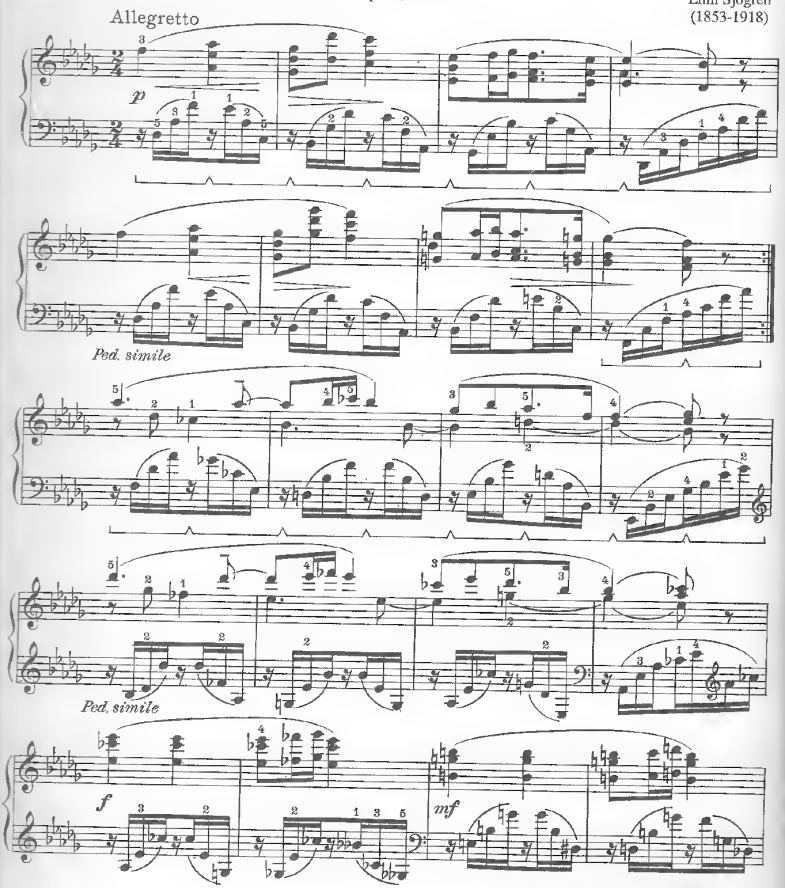

p dolce
p
mp
mf
pp
f
cresc. e poco accelerando
fz
ritard
a tempo
ff Grandioso
sempre forte
ritard.
fff
Più animato e legato
ff
rit. e morendo
D.C. al Fine

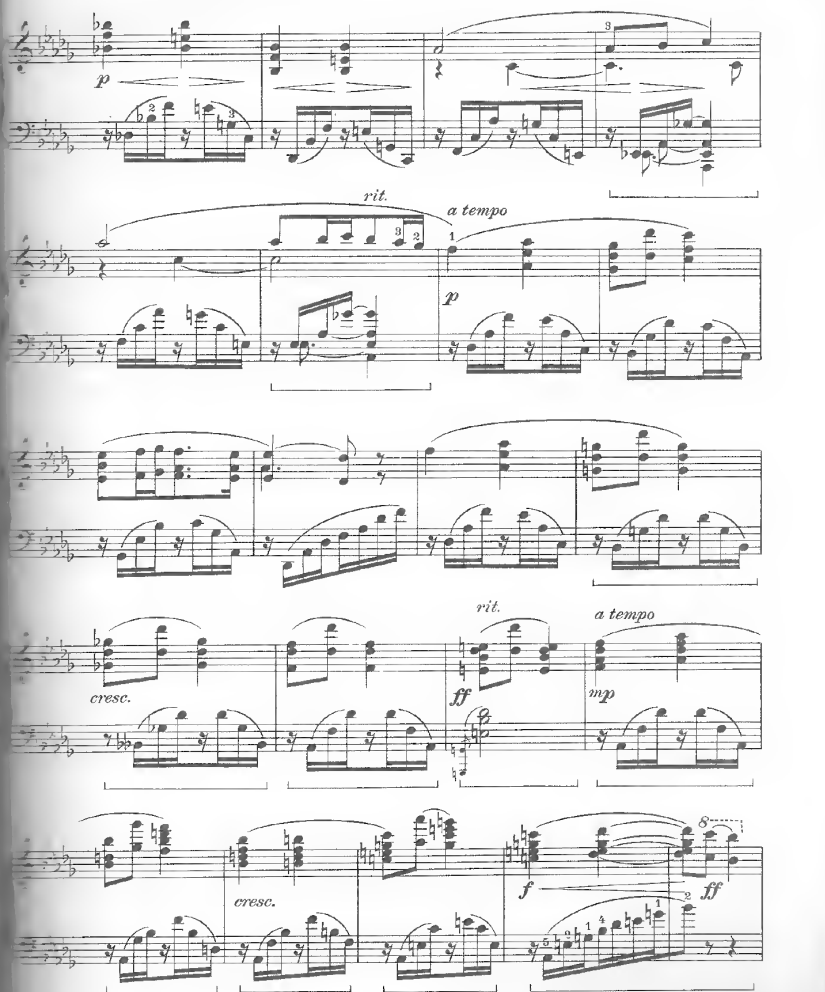
This beautiful composition in lyric style will amply repay careful attention to phrasing, pedalling and tonal quality.

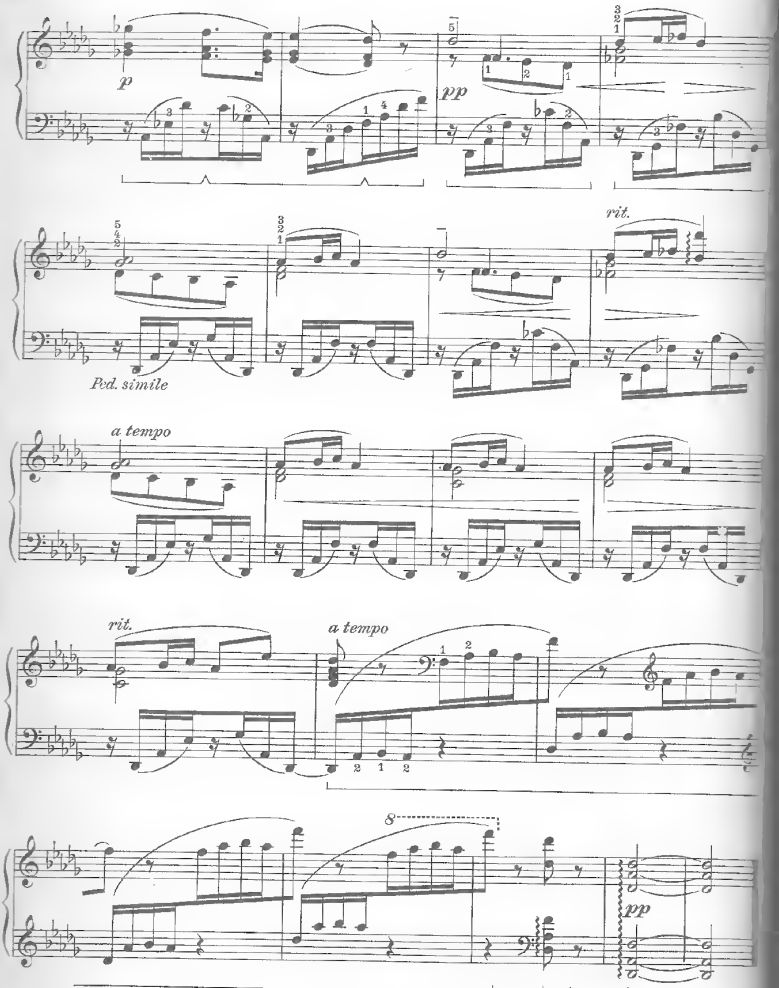
Erotikon

Op. 10, No. 2

Emil Sjögren
(1853-1918)




p
rit.
a tempo
p
cresc.
rit.
a tempo
ff
mp
cresc.
f
ff

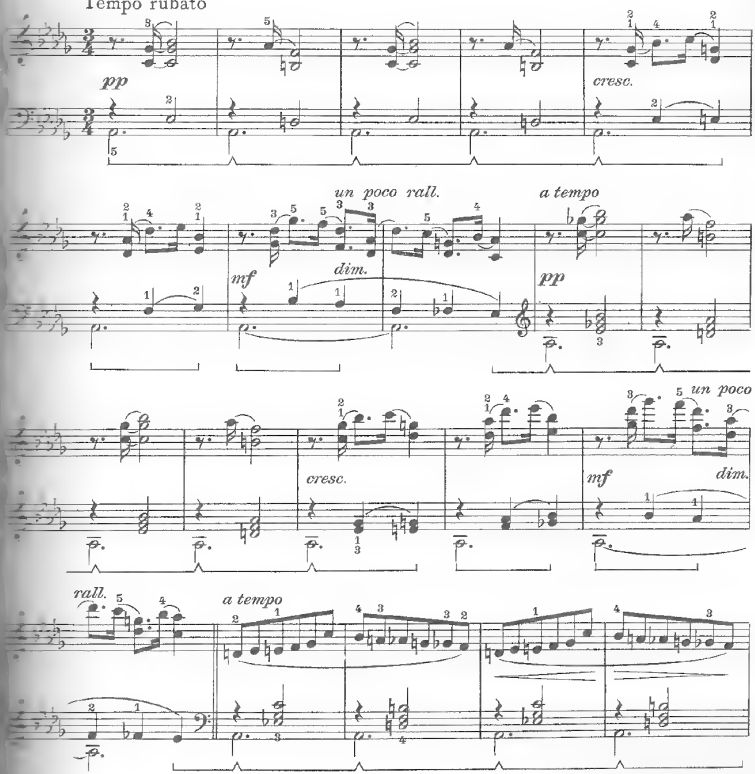

p
pp
rit.
Ped. simile
a tempo
rit.
a tempo
8
pp

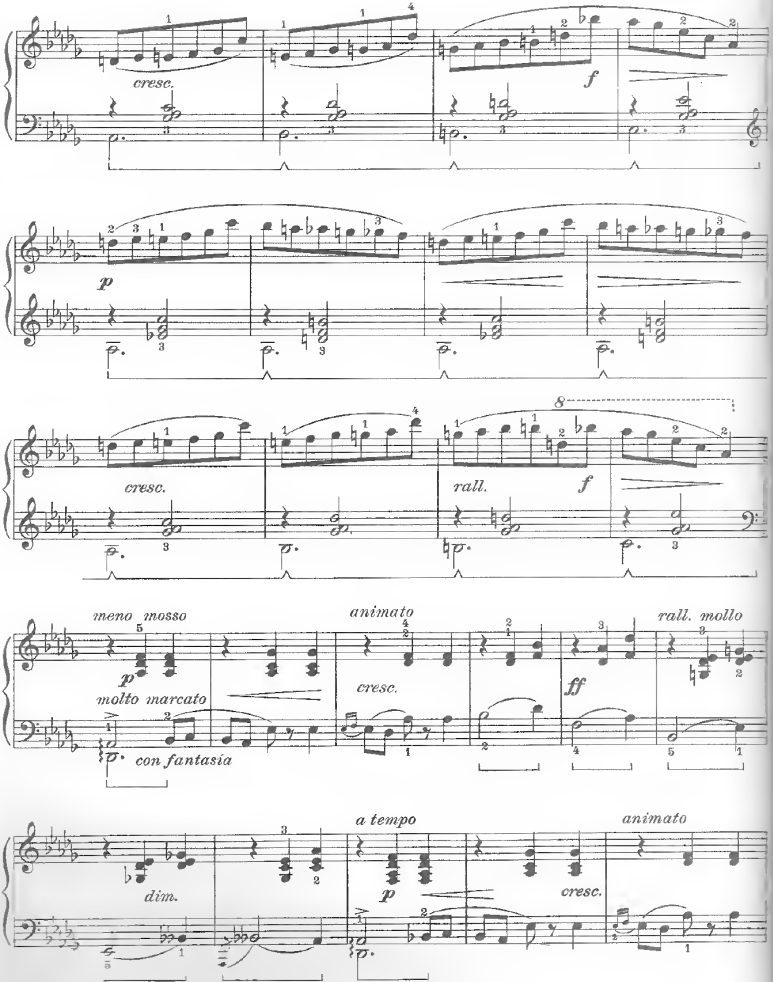
In this composition Godard has set out to imitate the style of Chopin. He has succeeded very well indeed, and the result is a piece half valse, half mazurka in style, and reminiscent of Chopin in a lighter vein and mood.

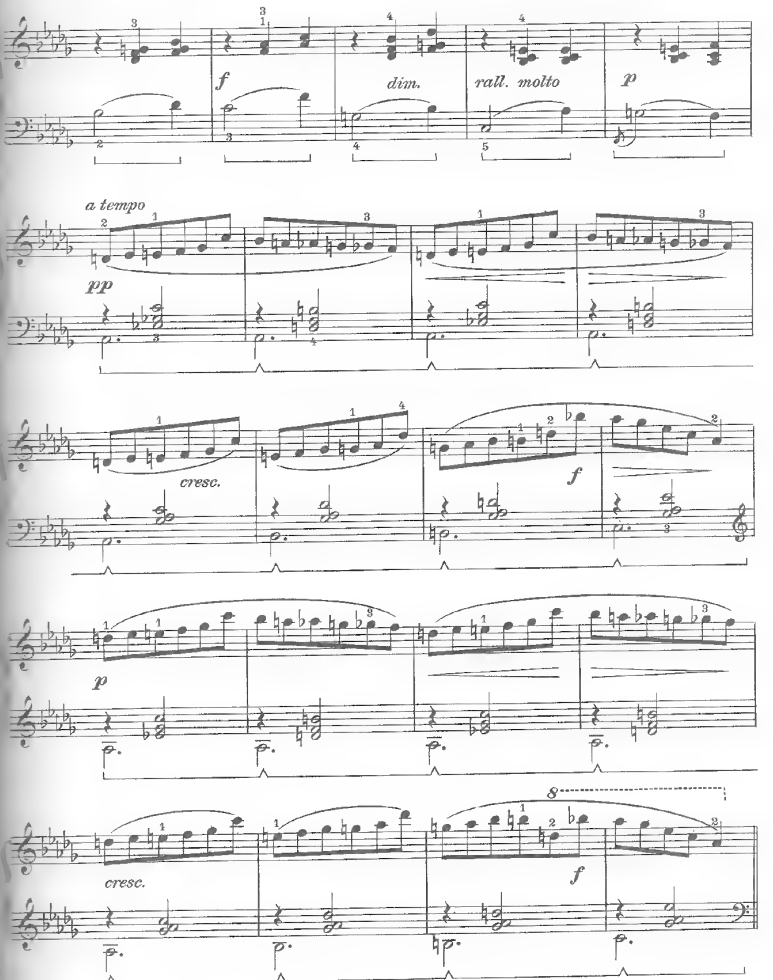
Chopin

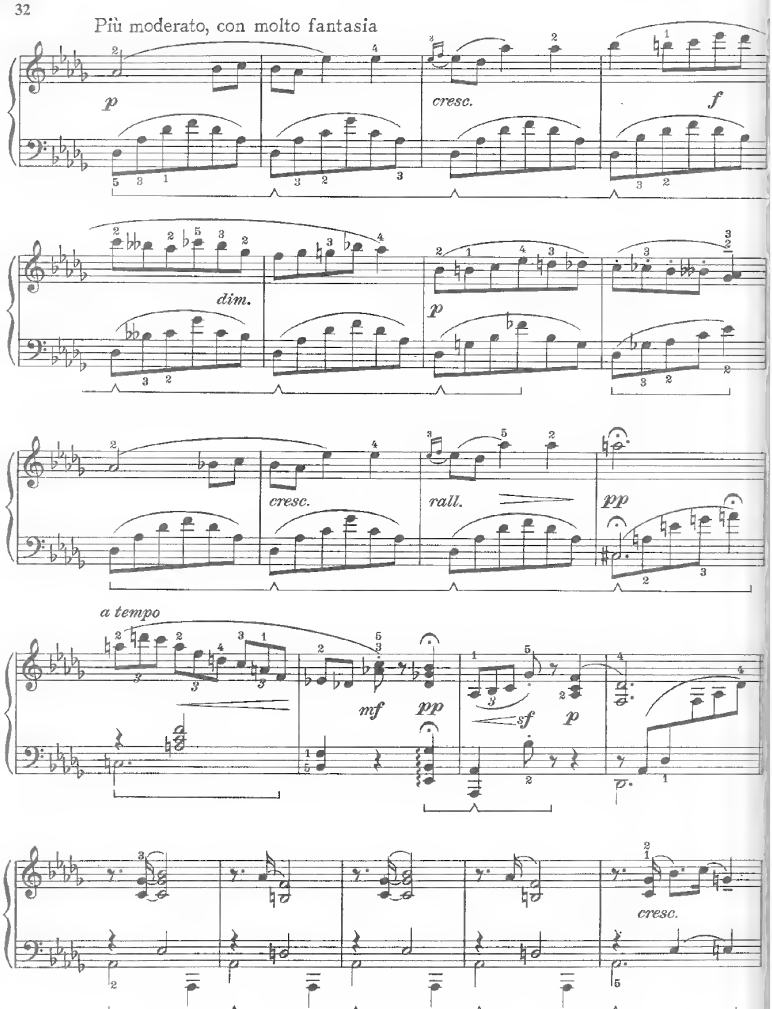
Op. 66, No. 2

Benjamin Godard
(1849-1895)




cresc.
f
p
cresc.
rall.
f
meno mosso
p
molto marcato
con fantasia
animato
cresc.
ff
rall. mollo
dim.
a tempo
p
animato
cresc.


f
dim.
rall. molto
p
a tempo
pp
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f
8

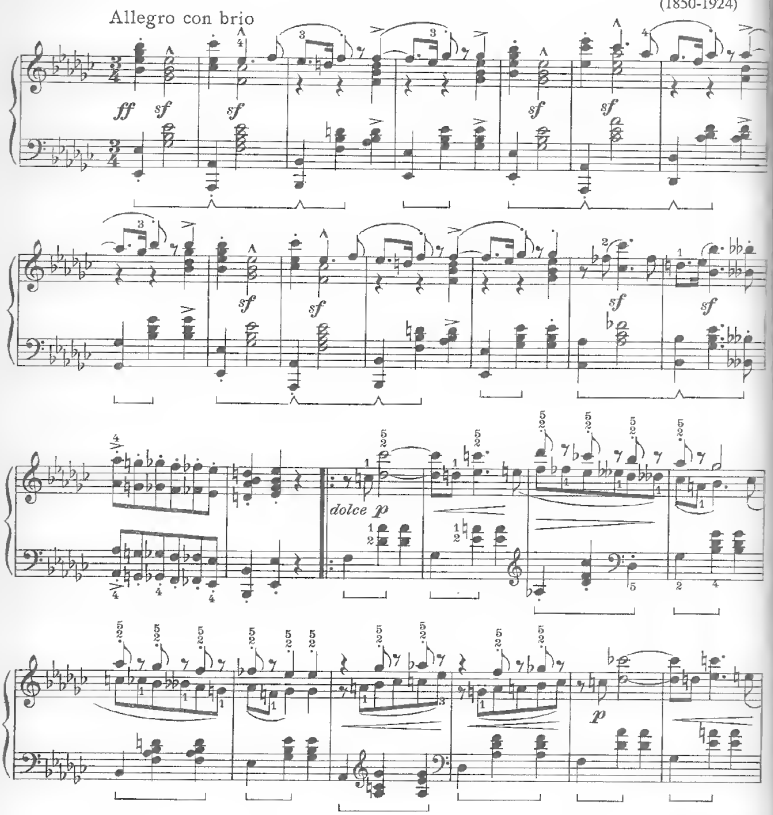

Più moderato, con molto fantasia
p
cresc.
f
dim.
p
cresc.
rall.
pp
a tempo
mf
pp
sf
p
cresc.

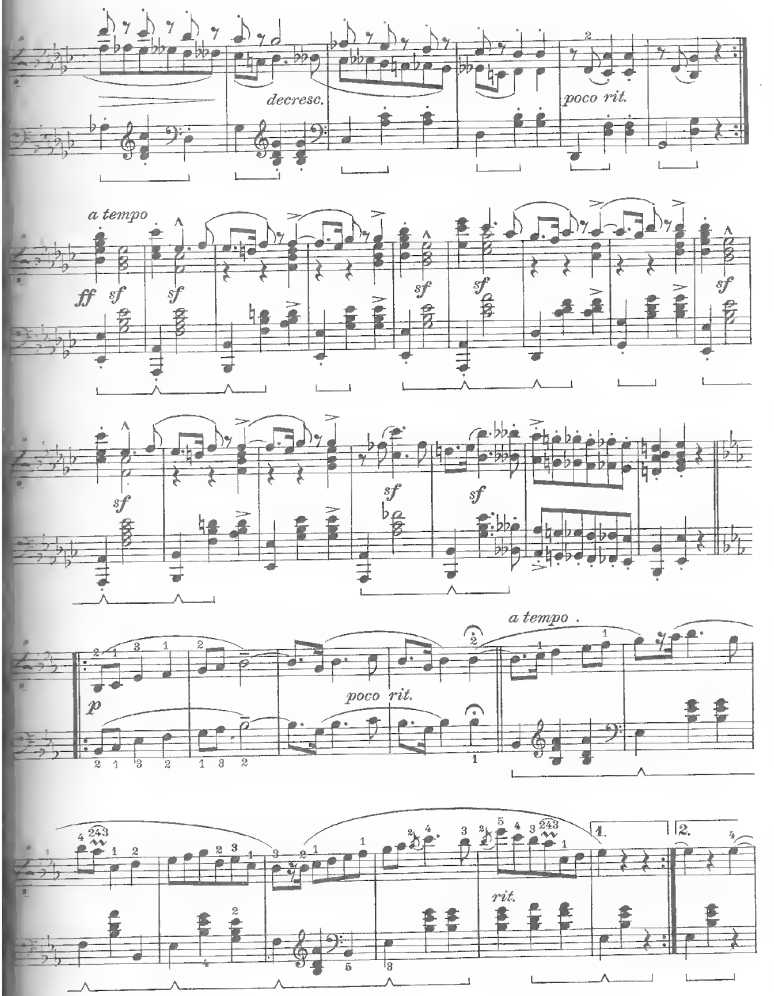
34

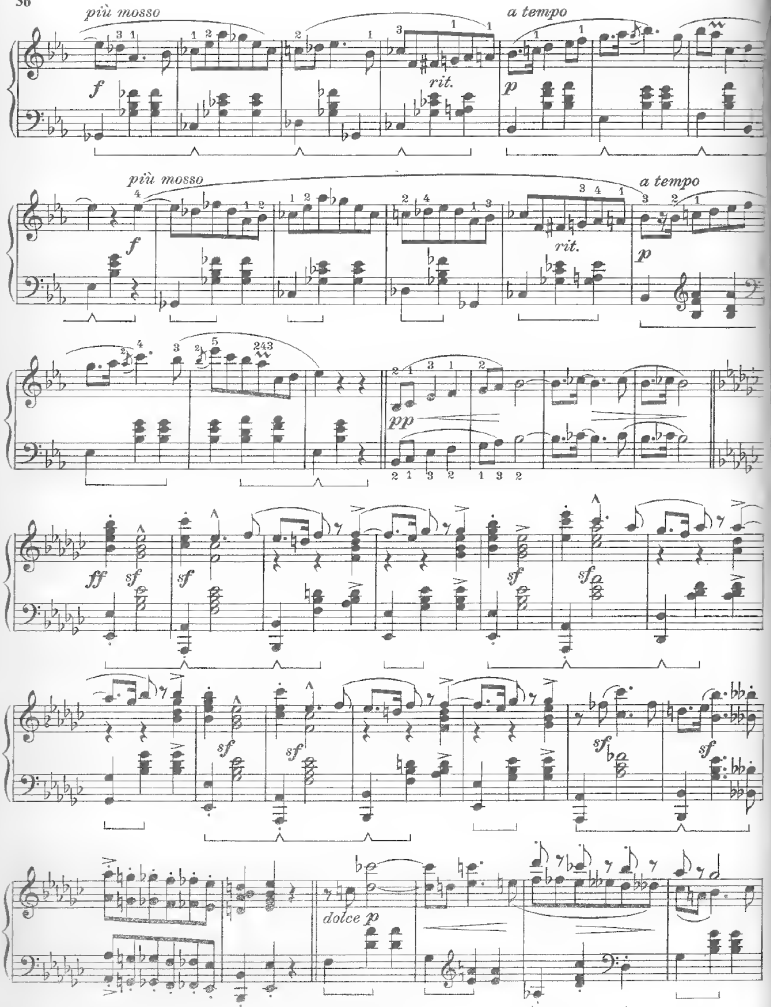
It is safe to use plenty of rhythmical vigor in the execution of this peasant dance. Use the up-arm stroke for the staccato chords and the down-arm stroke for the accented sustained chords. Dynamic contrasts should be sharp. Pedal with care.

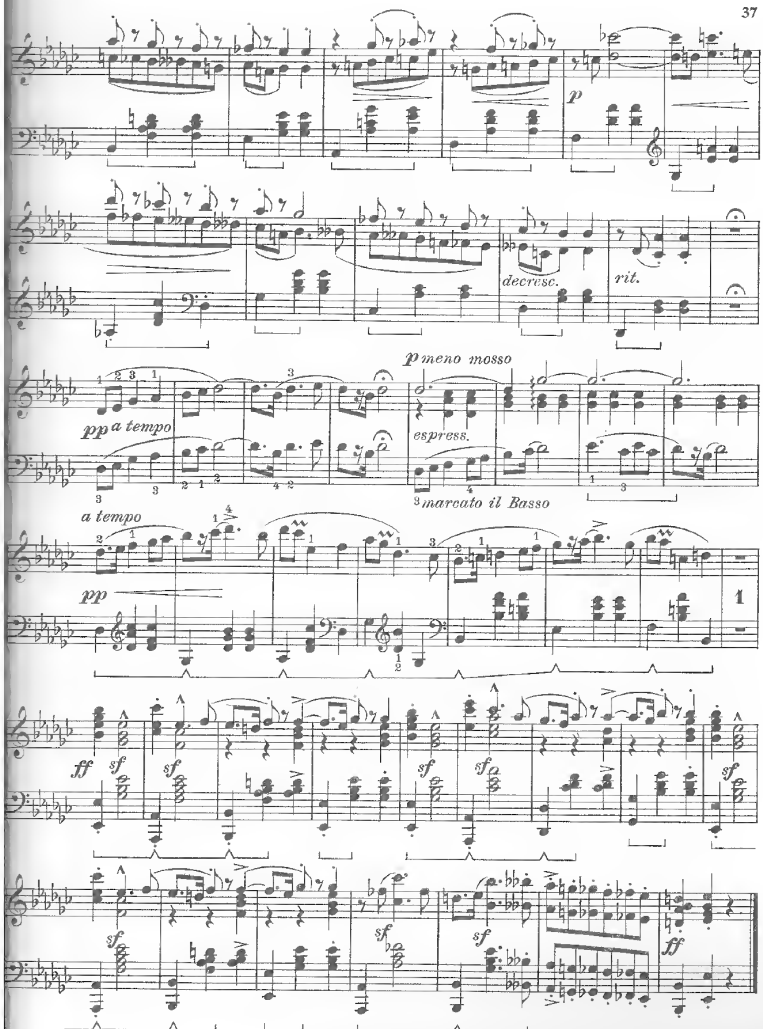
Polish Dance

Xaver Scharwenka
(1850-1924)




decresc.
poco rit.
a tempo
ff
sf
sf
sf
sf
sf
sf
sf
sf
a tempo .
p
poco rit.
rit.
1.
2.


più mosso
a tempo
rit.
più mosso
a tempo
rit.
dolce p

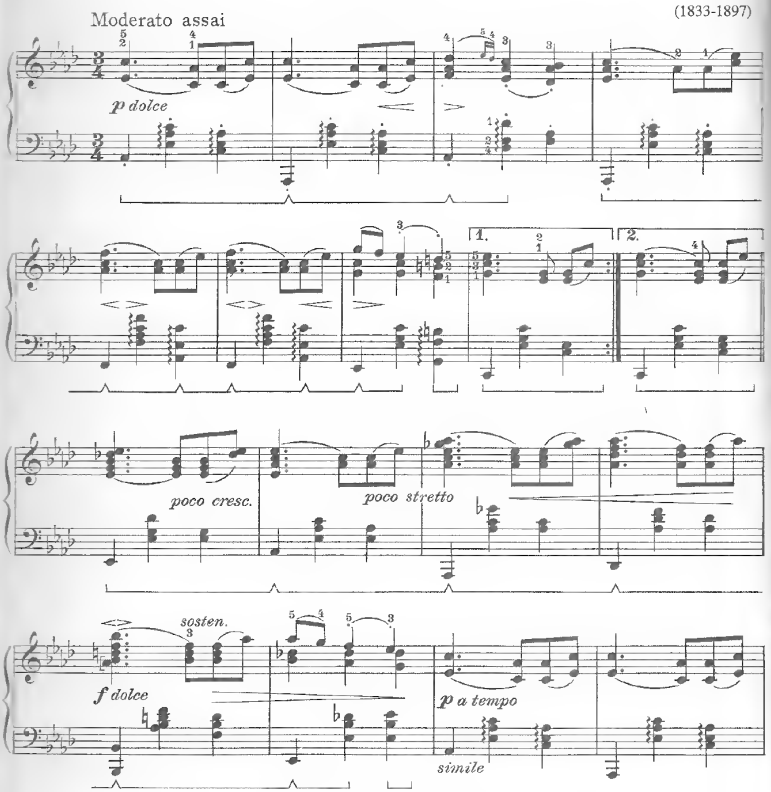

p
decresc.
rit.
p meno mosso
pp a tempo
espress.
marcato il Basso
a tempo
pp
1
ff
sf
sf
sf
sf
sf
sf
sf
sf
sf
ff

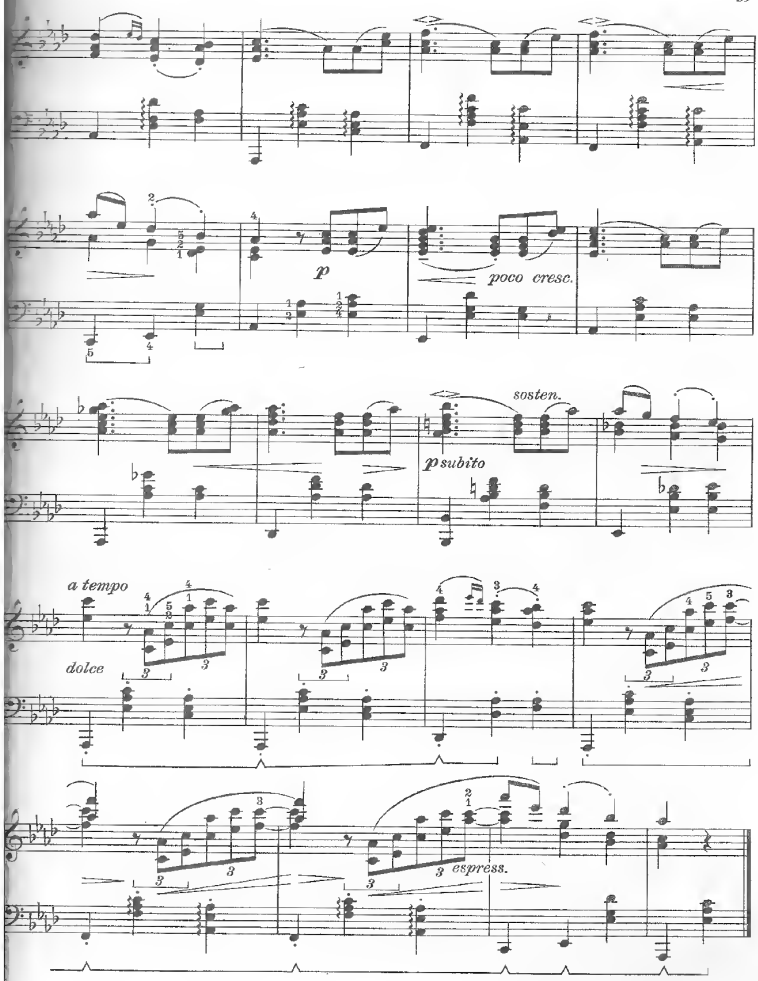
The numerous and varying treatments accorded the waltz form have been explained in the FOURTH GRADE BOOK (Pages 18 and 28).
The waltzes of Brahms, like those of Beethoven, have for their inspiration the old German 'Ländler' or peasant dance and should be played in forthright fashion, at once simple, direct and sincere. Avoid any attempt to impart subtlety or sophistication to these measures. Save such effects for the valses of Chopin, for example.

Waltz

A flat major
Op. 39, No. 15

J. Brahms
(1833-1897)



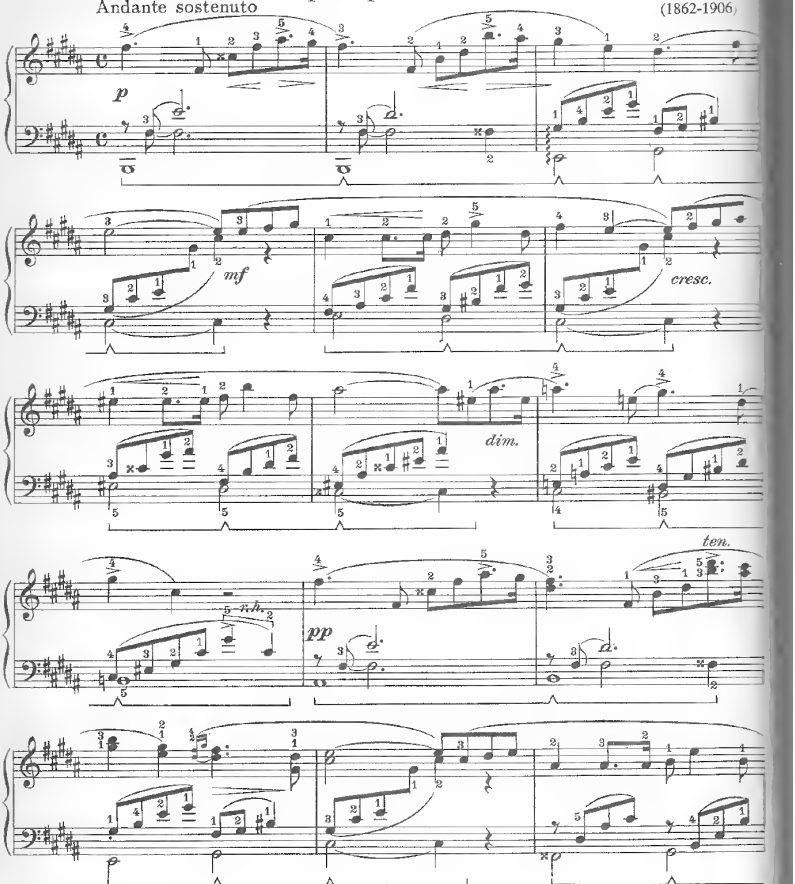

p
poco cresc.
sosten.
p subito
a tempo
dolce
espress.

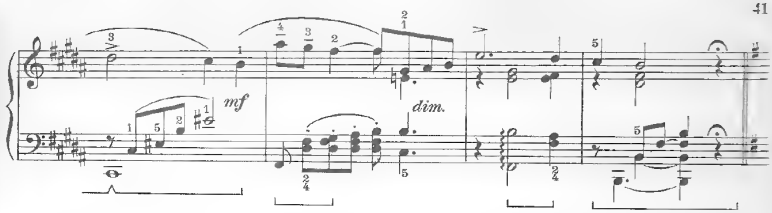
Although Arensky saw fit to title this composition 'Impromptu', its plaintive, heart-searching melodies suggest a Nocturne. This piece will reward the most careful tonal treatment. Carefully observe all phrasing and use pedal as indicated.

Impromptu in B

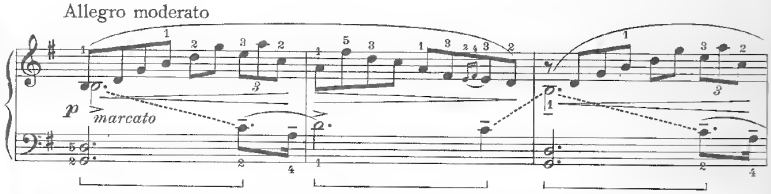
Anton S. Arensky
(1862-1906)

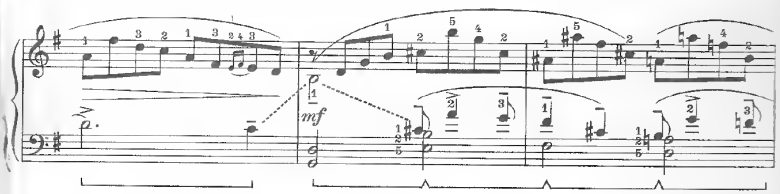
Andante sostenuto

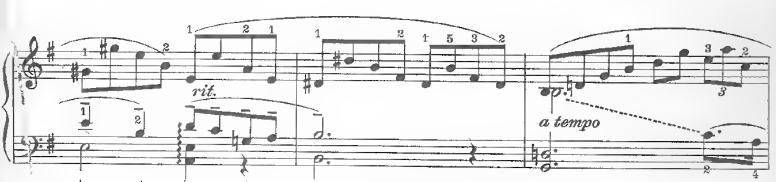


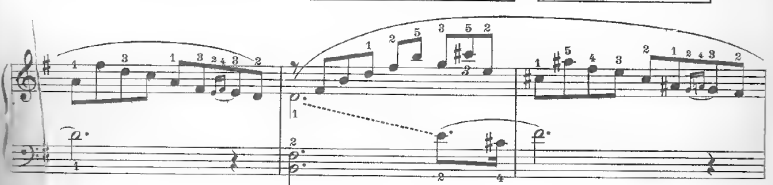


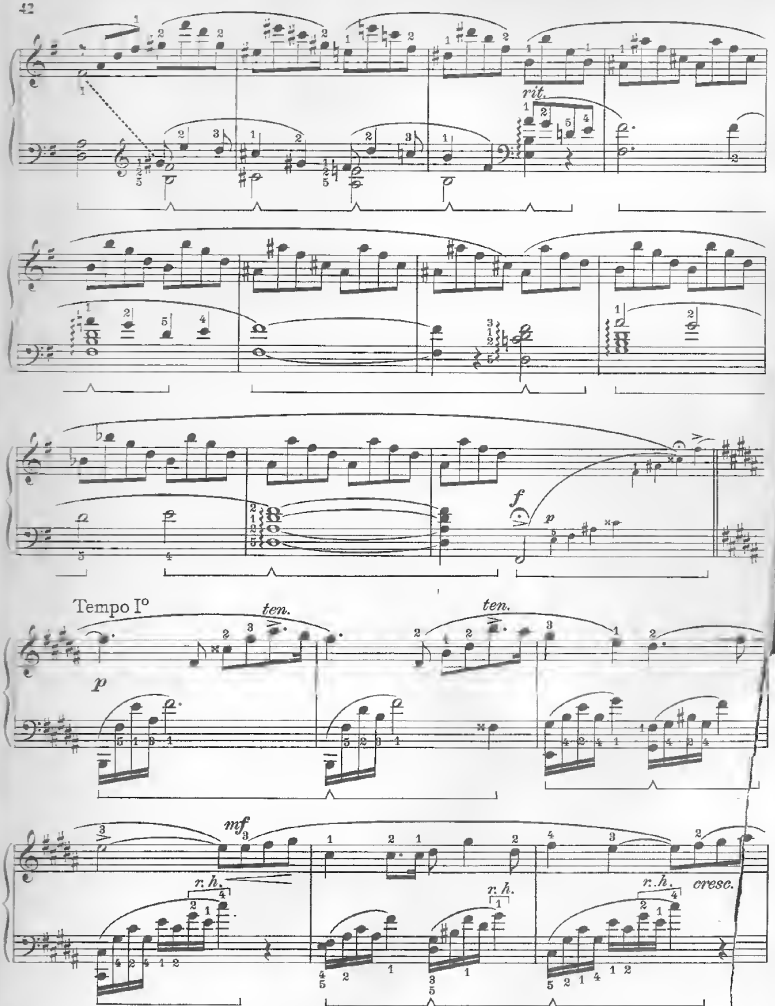
Allegro moderato

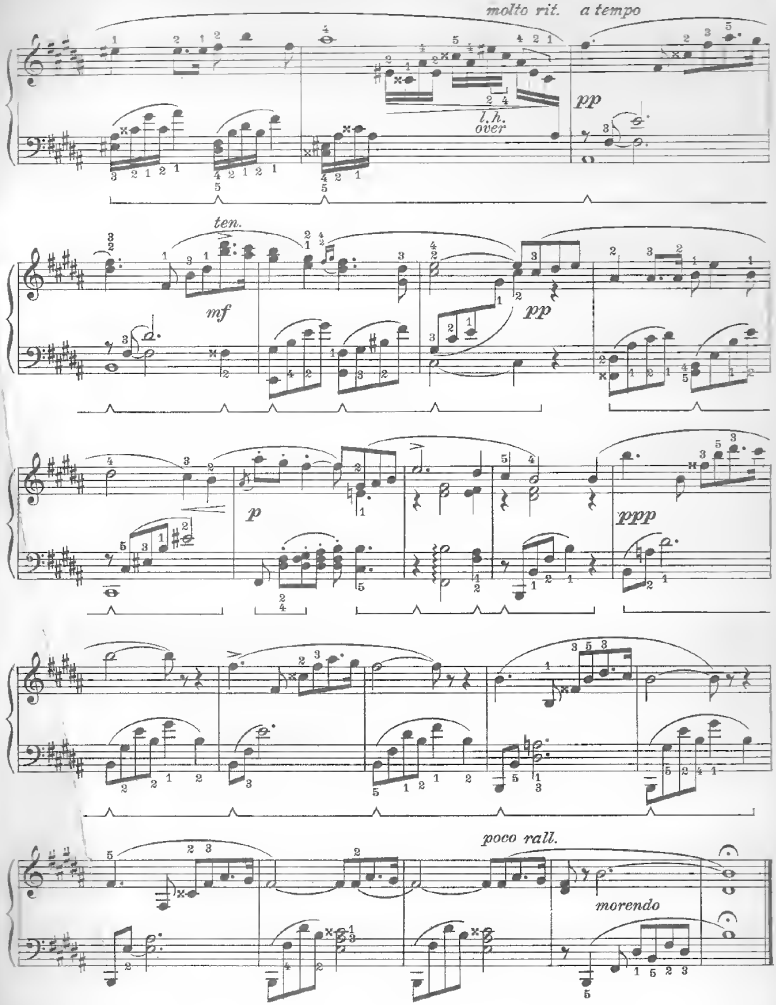









rit.
f
p
Tempo I°
ten.
ten.
p
mf
r. h.
r. h.
r. h.
cresc.

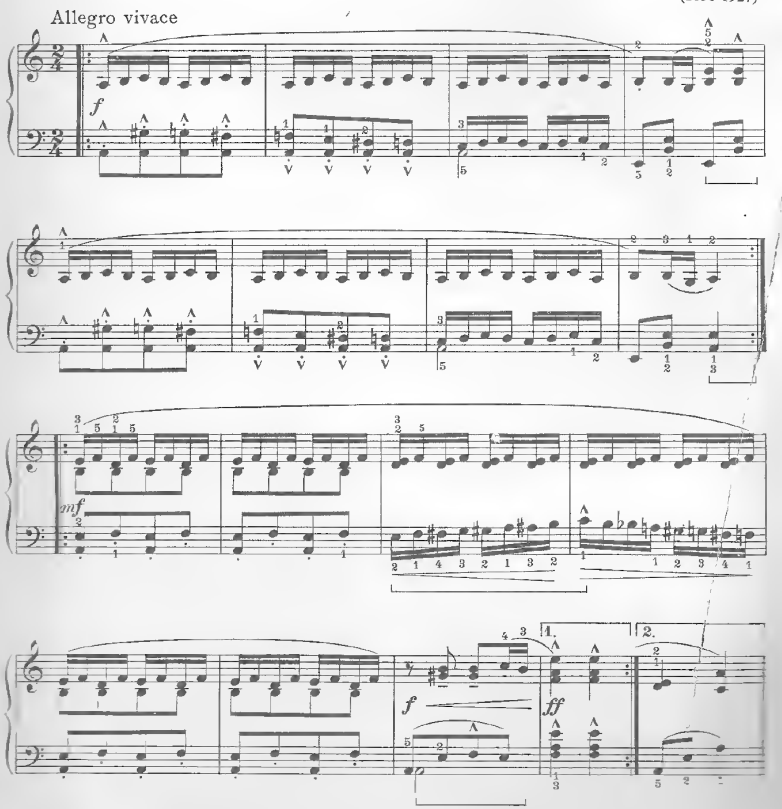

molto rit.
a tempo
pp
l.h.
over
ten.
mf
pp
p
ppp
poco rall.
morendo

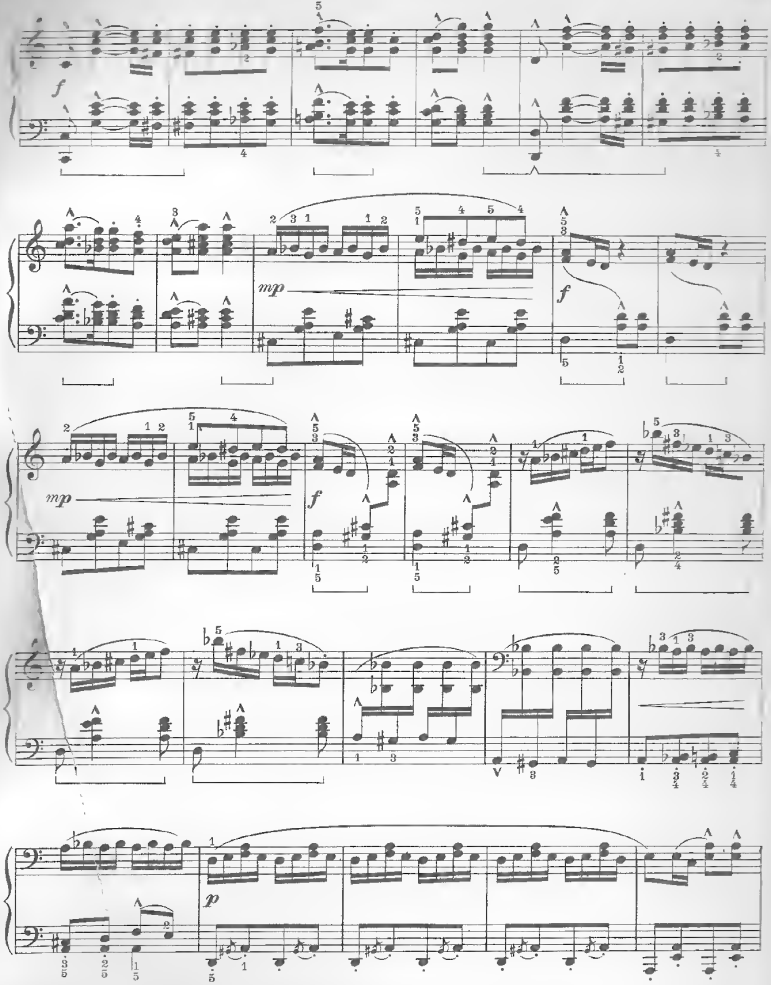
According to ancient Norwegian legend 'Fanitul' was the name of a savage dance dictated by the Evil One to village musicians. As time passed on, belief in the diabolical origin of the dance grew, and sometimes led to mortal combat between peasants when musicians played it at rural weddings.

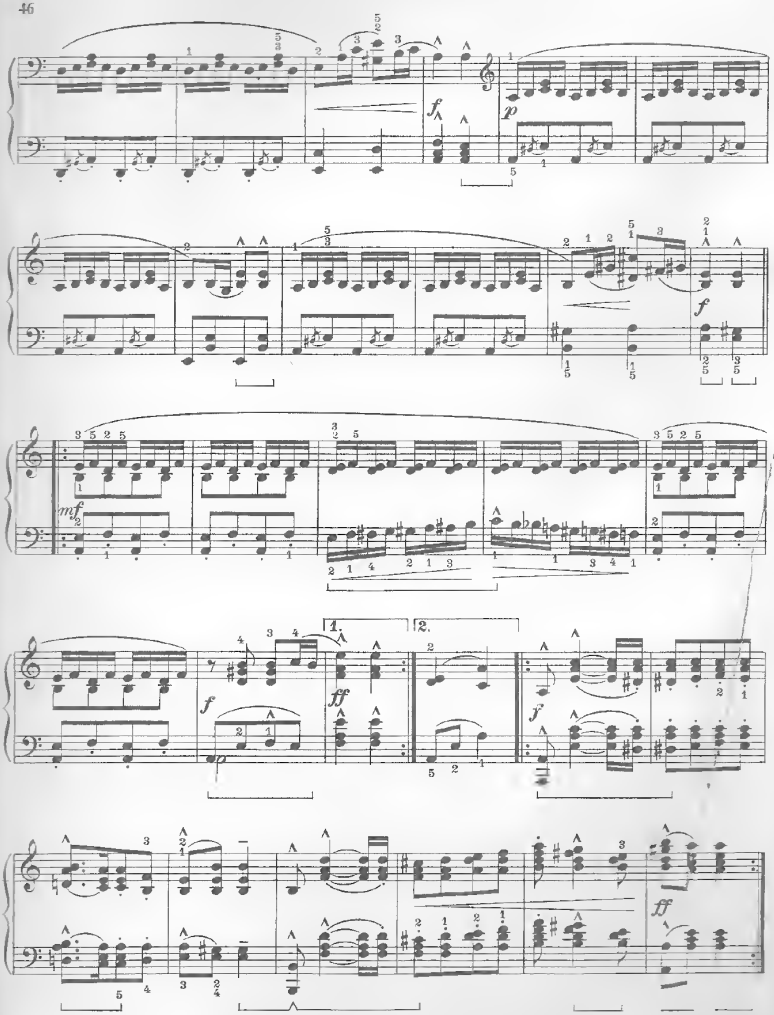
Fanitul

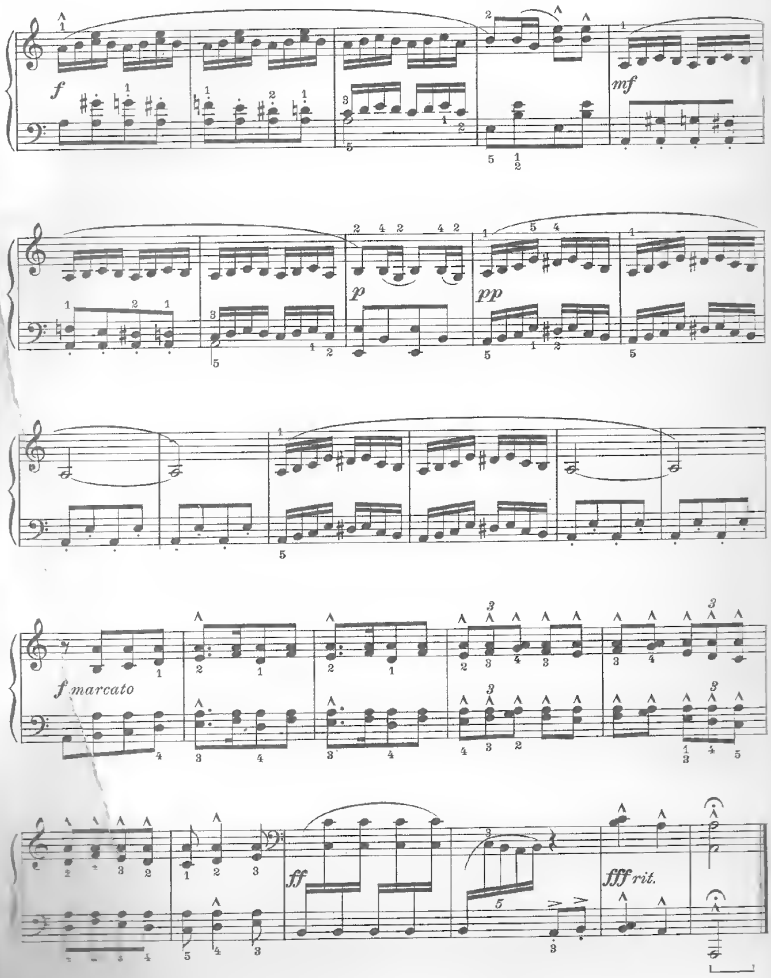
Op. 23, No. 3

Ole Olsen
(1850-1927)




f
mp
f
mp
f
p


f
p
f
mf
1.
2.
ff
f
f
ff

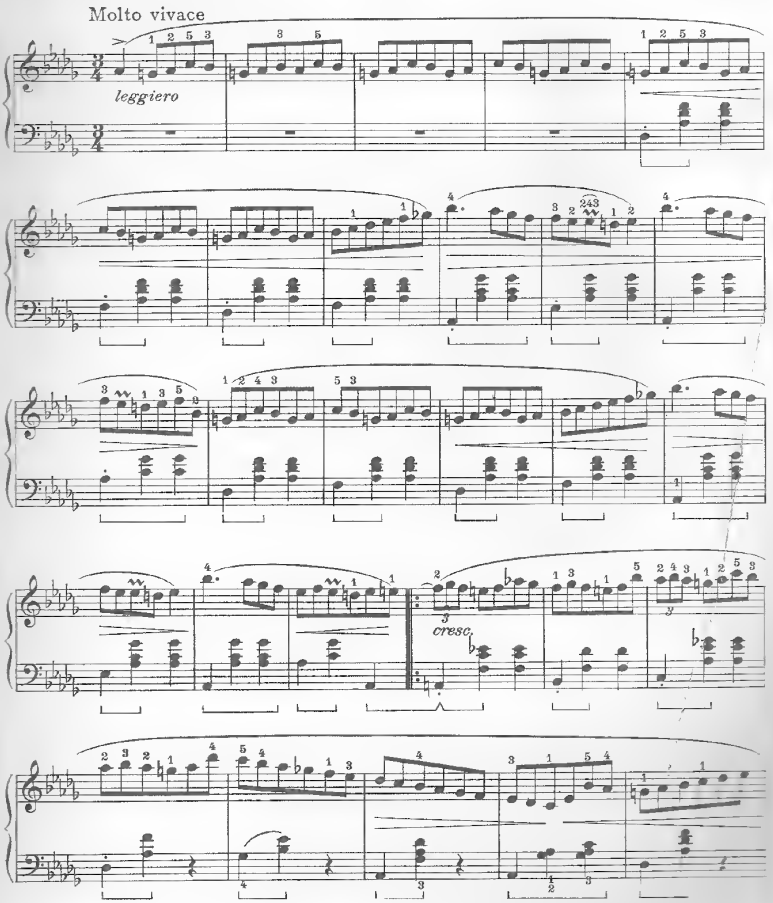

f
mf
p
pp
f marcato
ff
fff rit.

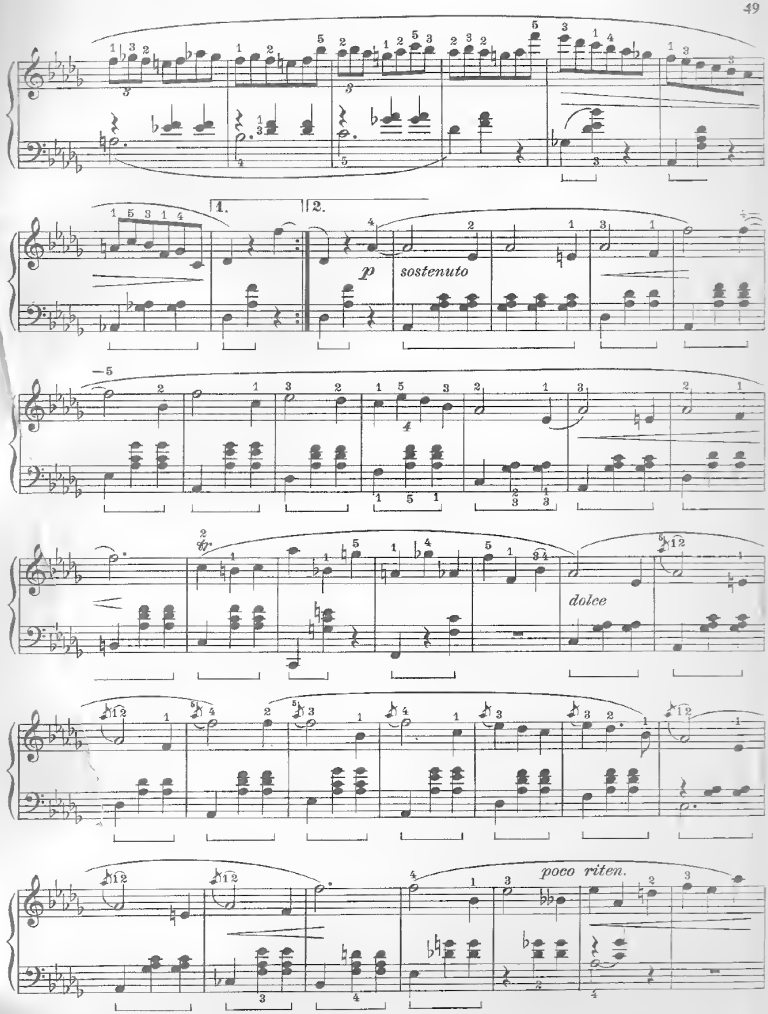
A Madame la Comtesse Delphine Potocka

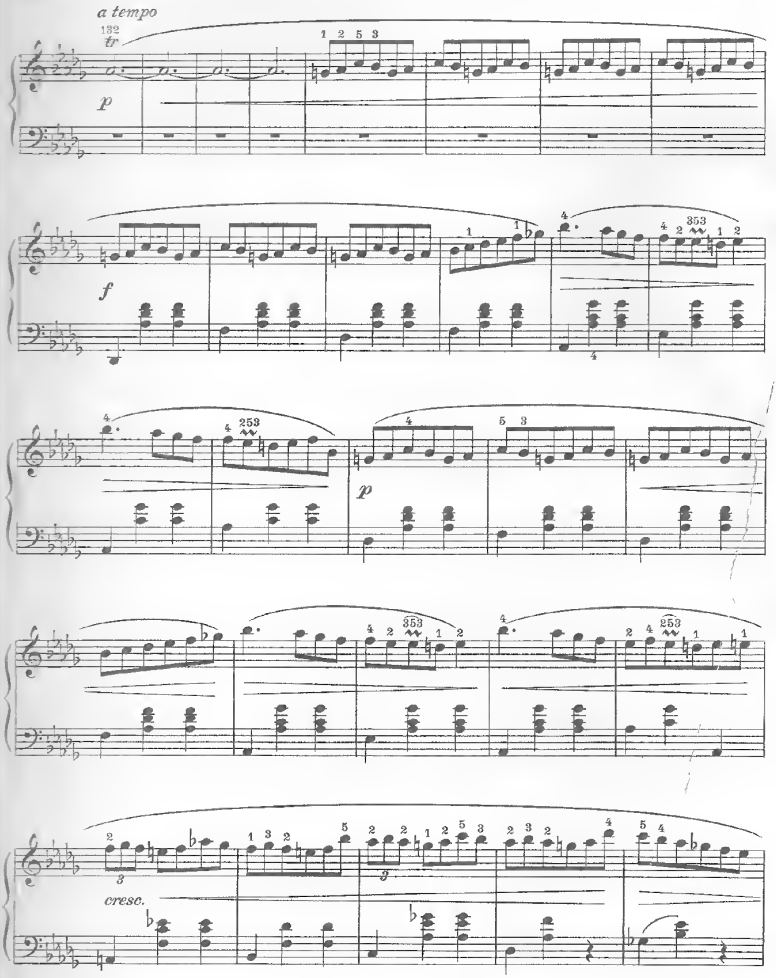
Valse

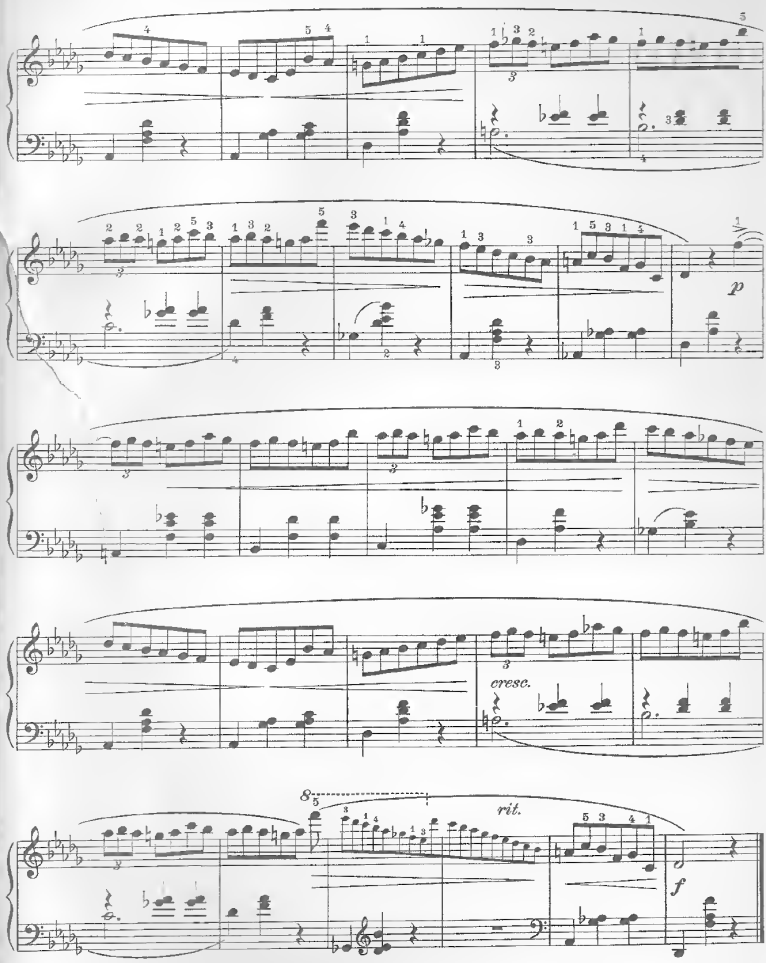
Op. 64, No. 1

F. Chopin
(1810-1849)




1.
2.
p
sostenuto
dolce
poco riten.

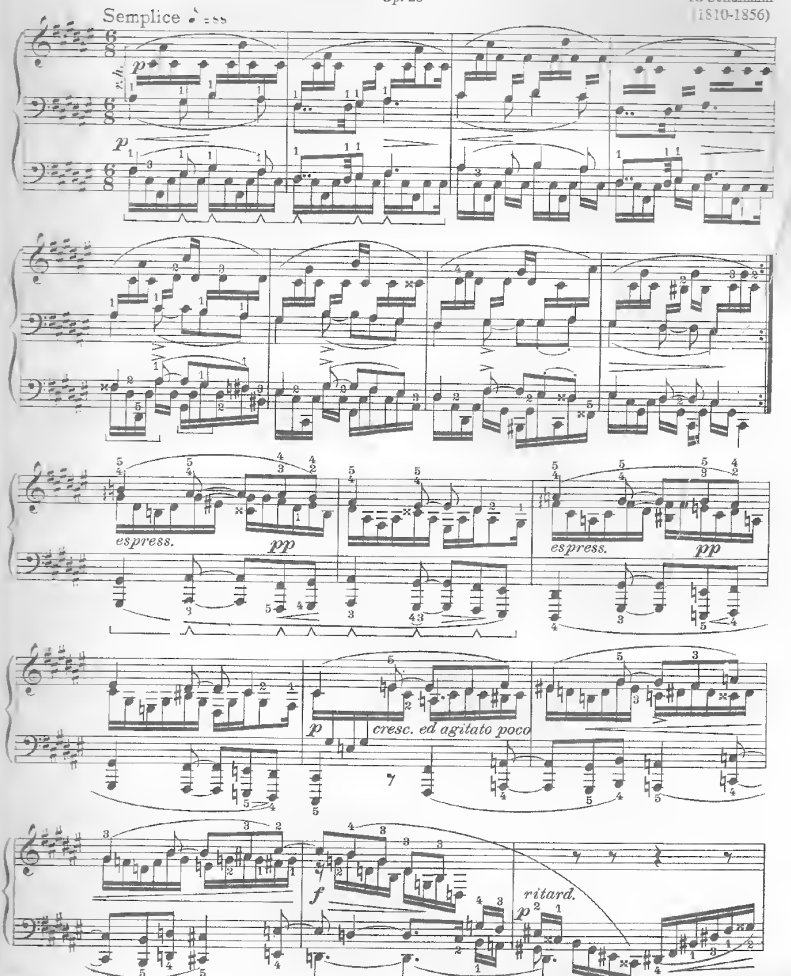

a tempo
132
tr
p
f
p
cresc.

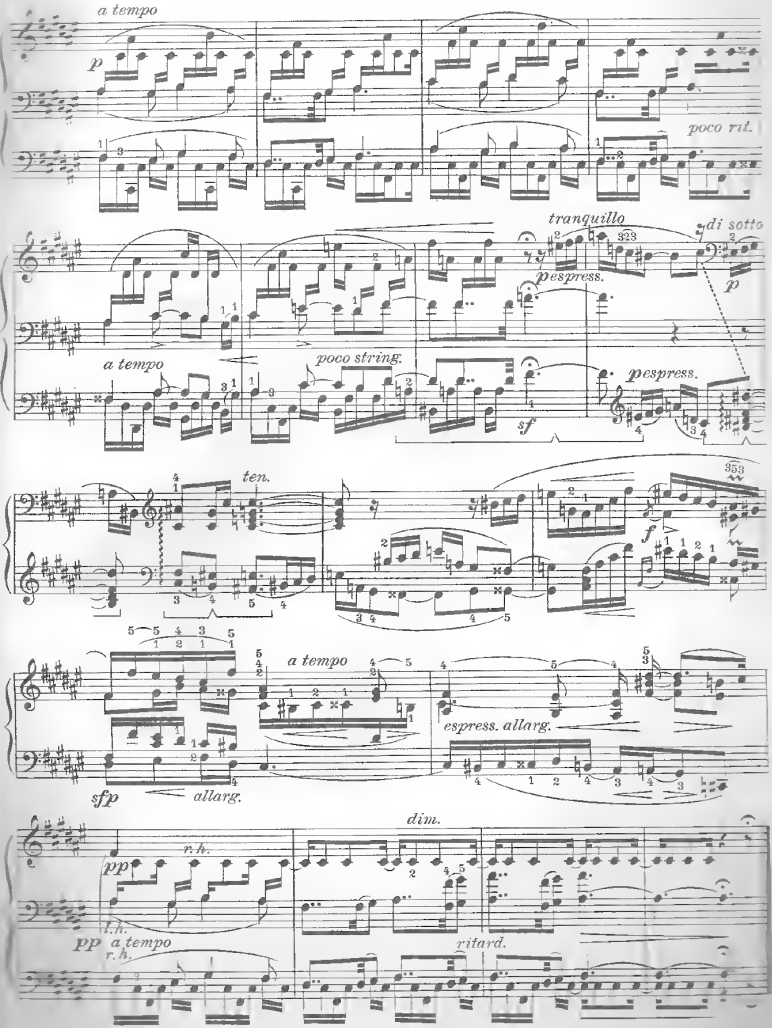

p
cresc.
rit.
f

Romance

Op. 28

R. Schumann
(1810-1856)



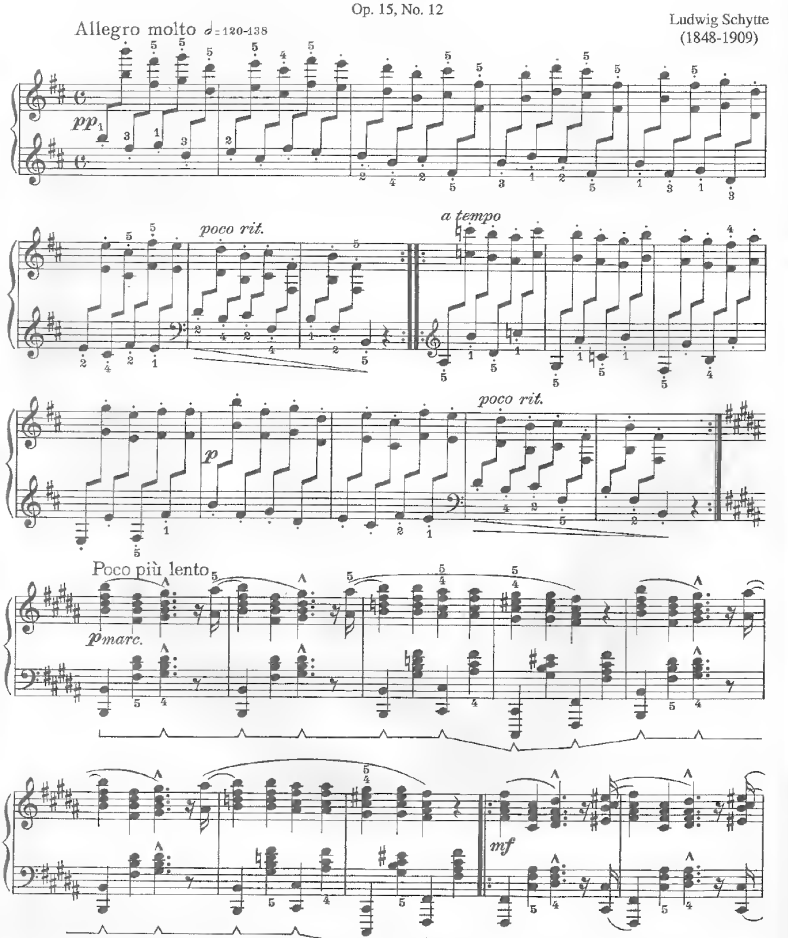

a tempo
p
poco rit.
tranquillo
di sotto
pespress.
p
a tempo
poco string.
pespress.
sf
ten.
f
a tempo
espress. allarg.
sfp
allarg.
dim.
pp
r.h.
l.h.
pp
a tempo
r.h.
ritard.

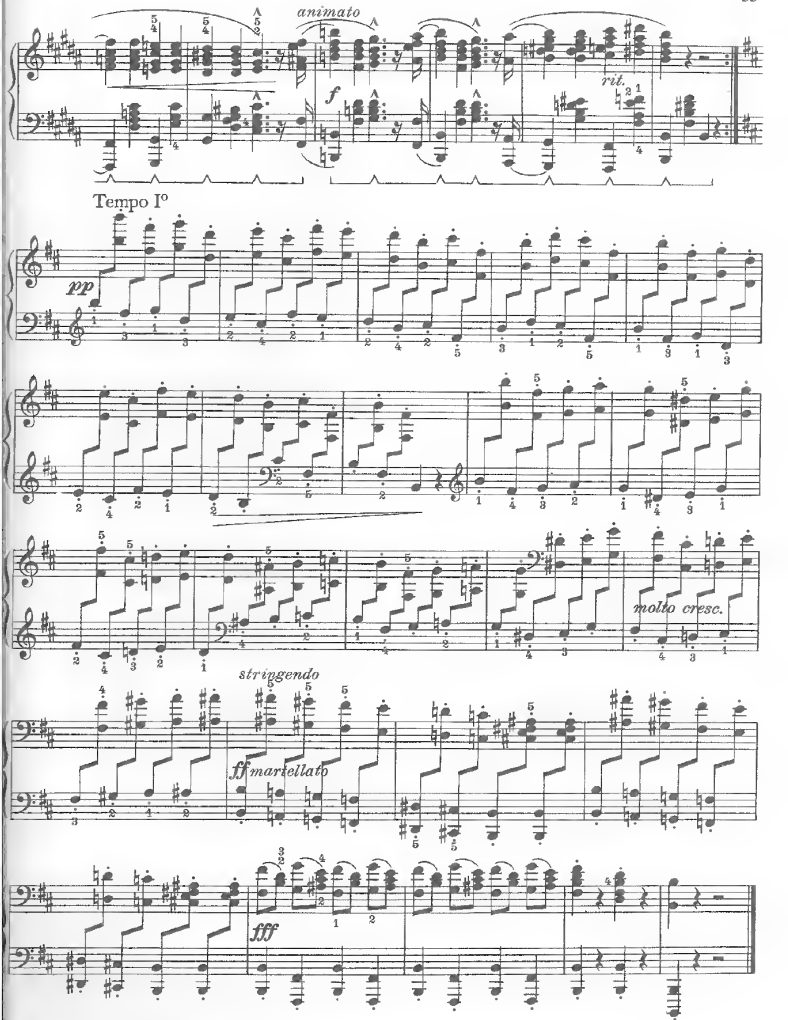
Ghosts

(Etude)

Op. 15, No. 12

Ludwig Schytte
(1848-1909)



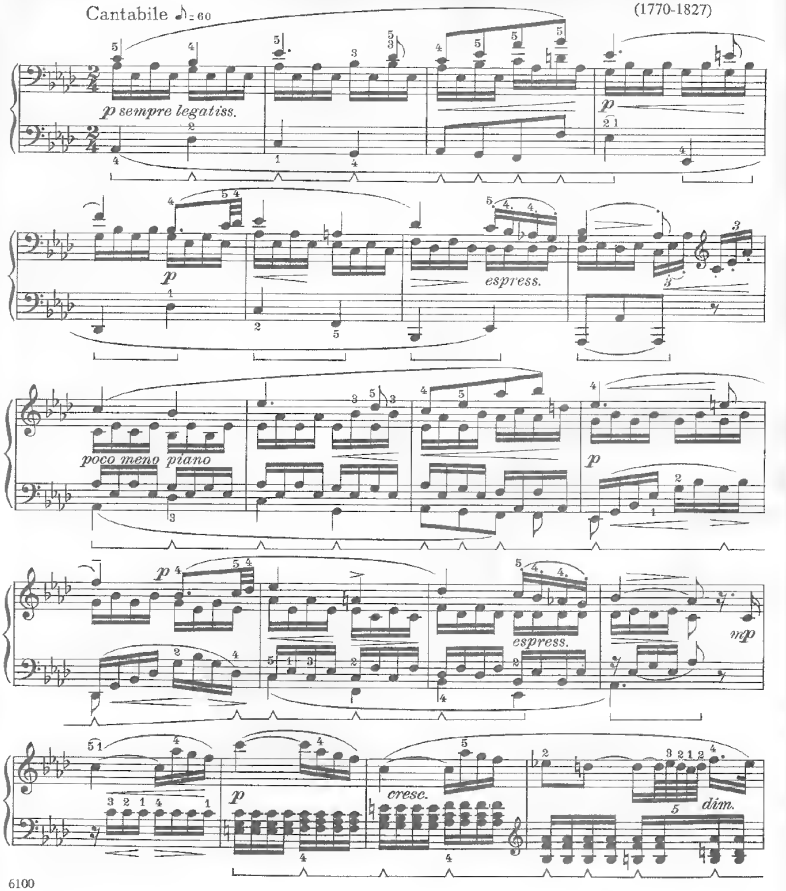

animato
f
rit.
Tempo I°
pp
molto cresc.
stringendo
ff martellato
fff

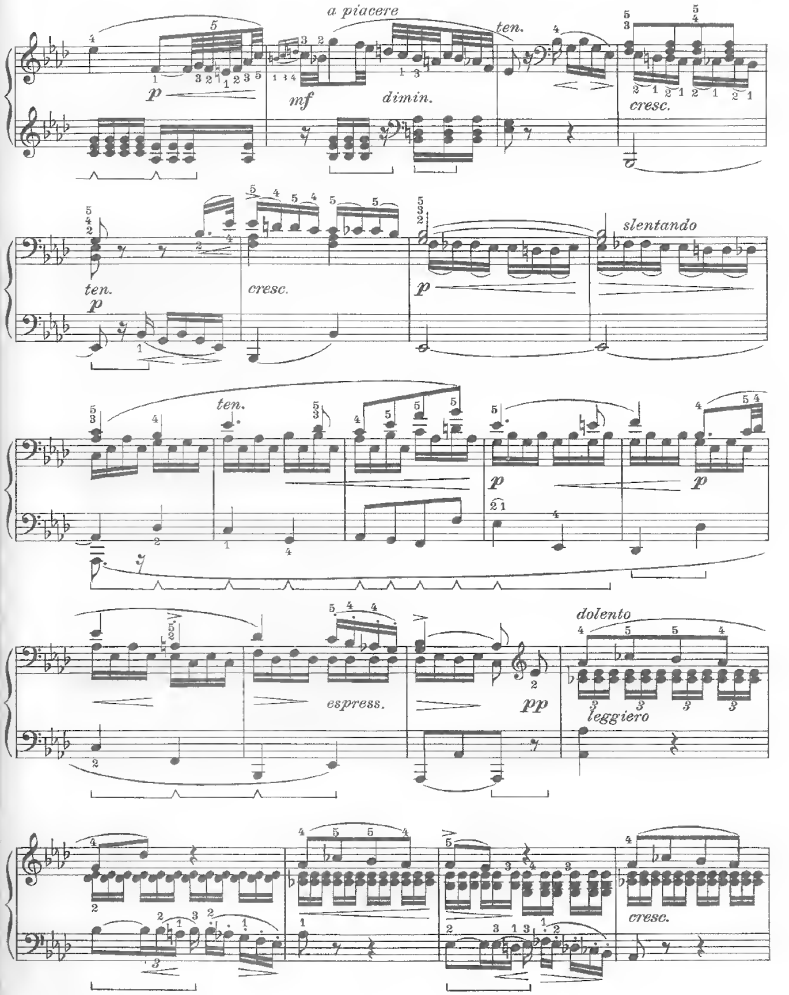
This inspired and inspiring *Adagio* from the Sonata "Pathétique" of the great master is so beautiful and so complete in itself that it is frequently performed as a solo number. The melody should be accorded one's very best singing tone. Establish proper tonal balance between voices. Phrase and pedal with utmost care.

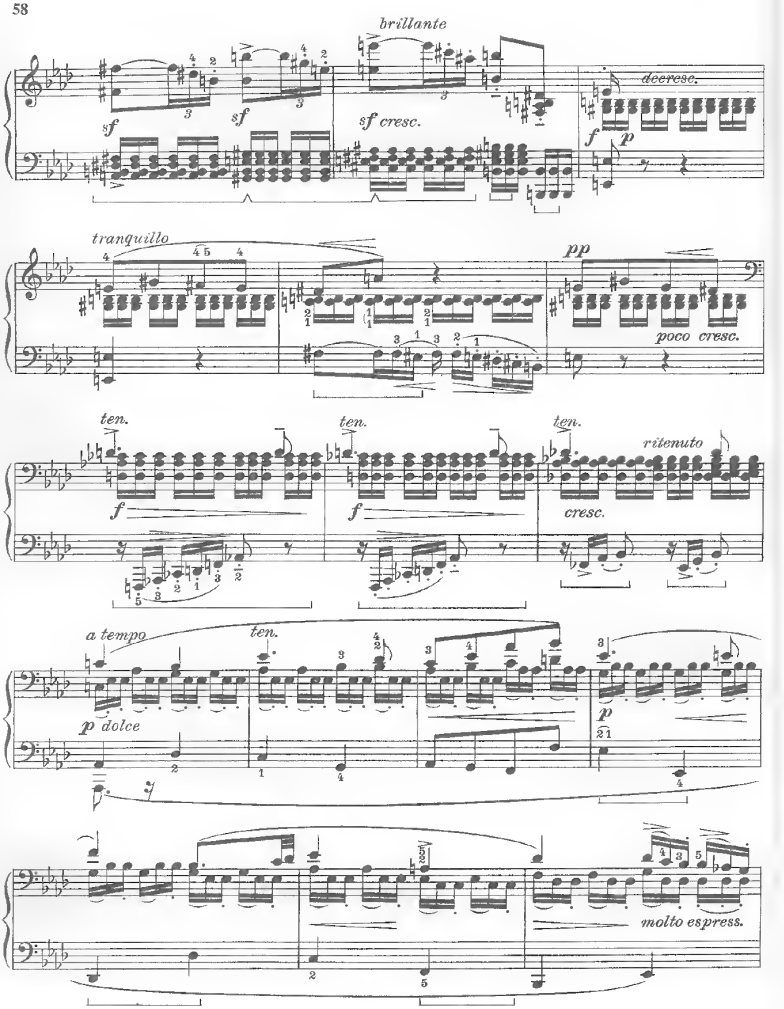
Adagio

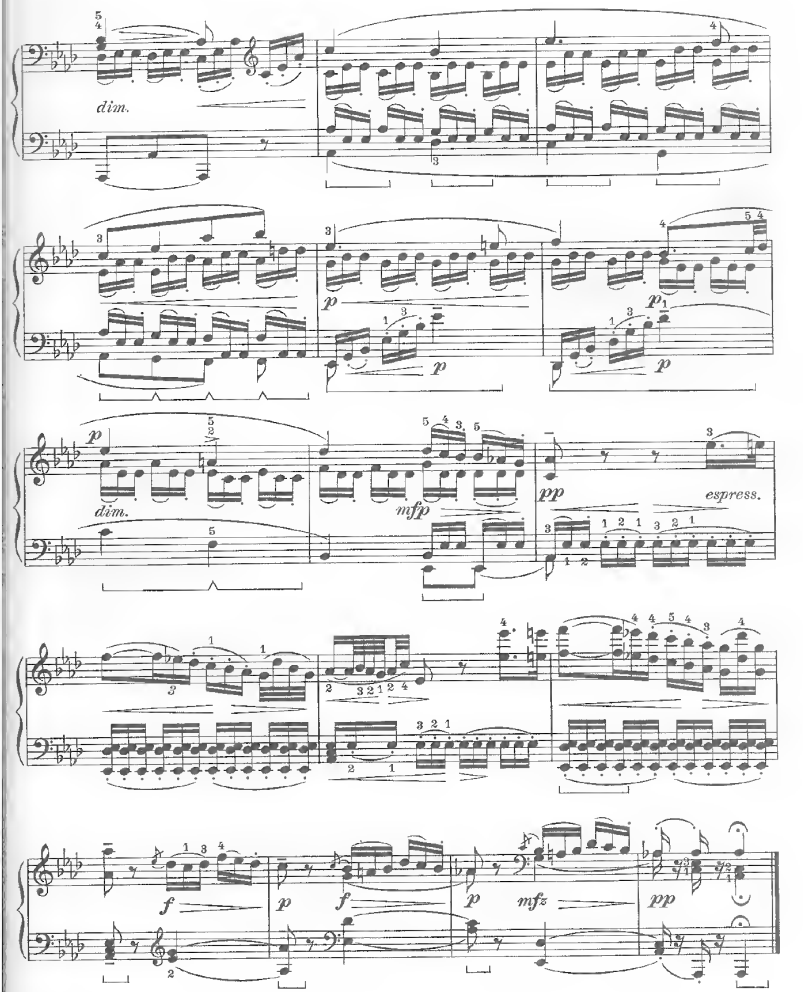
from Sonata "Pathétique"

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)




a piacere
ten.
p
mf
dimin.
cresc.
ten.
p
cresc.
slentando
p
ten.
p
p
espress.
pp
dolento
leggiero
cresc.

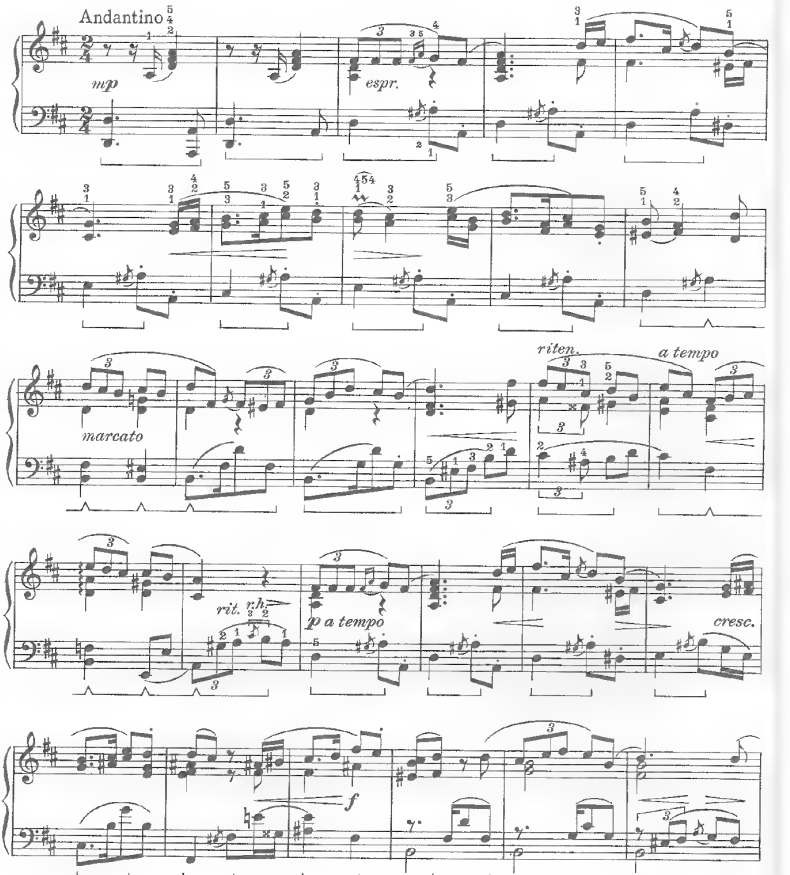

brillante
sf
sf
sf cresc.
decresc.
f
p
tranquillo
pp
poco cresc.
ten.
ten.
ten.
ritenuto
f
f
cresc.
a tempo
ten.
p dolce
p
molto espress.

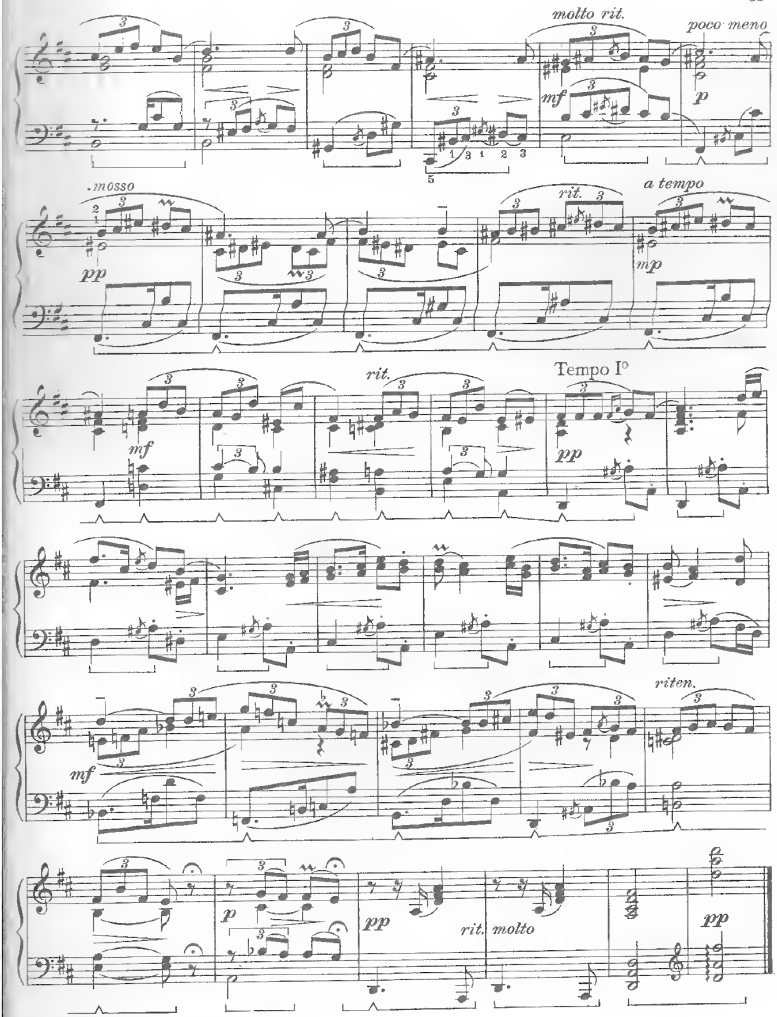

dim.
p
p
p
dim.
mfp
pp
espress.
f
p
f
p
mfz
pp

Tango in D

Op. 165, No. 2

Isaac Albeniz
(1861-1909)

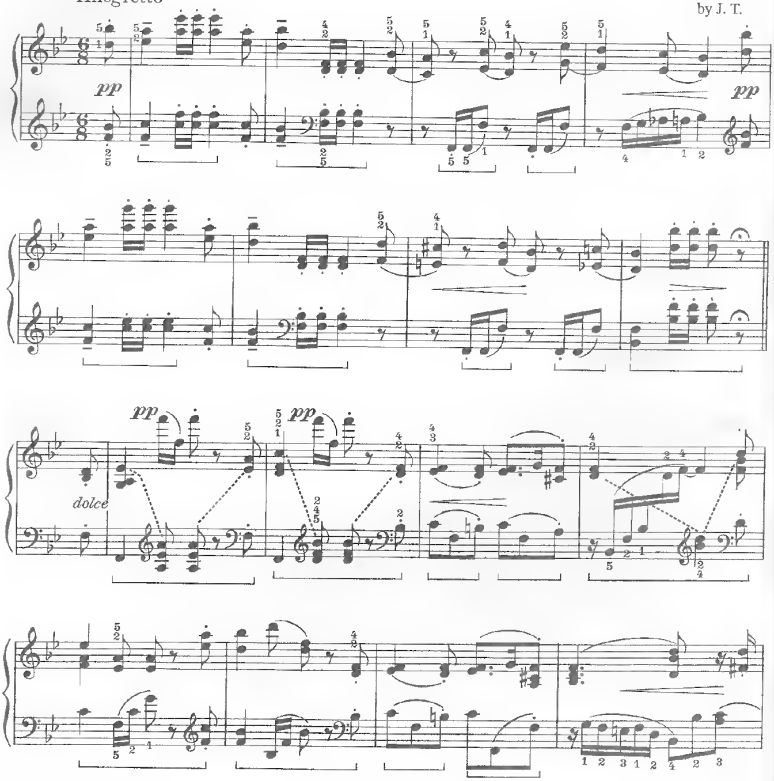


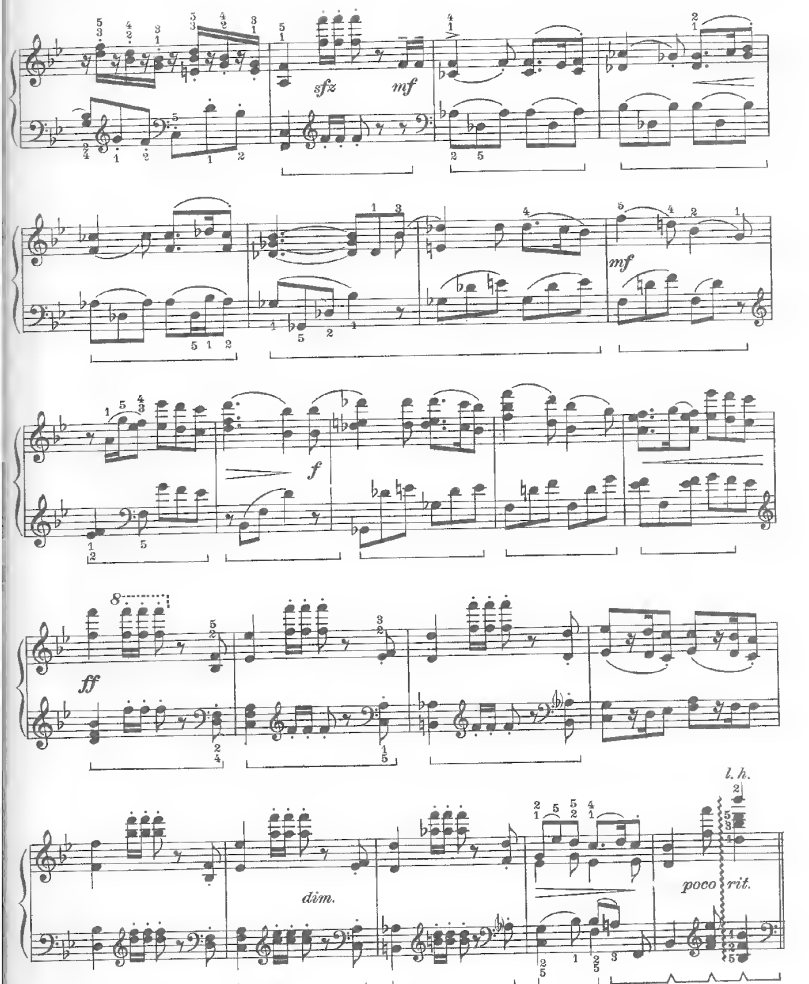

molto rit.
poco meno
mf
p
mosso
pp
rit.
a tempo
mp
Tempo I°
rit.
mf
pp
ritem.
mf
p
pp
rit. molto
pp

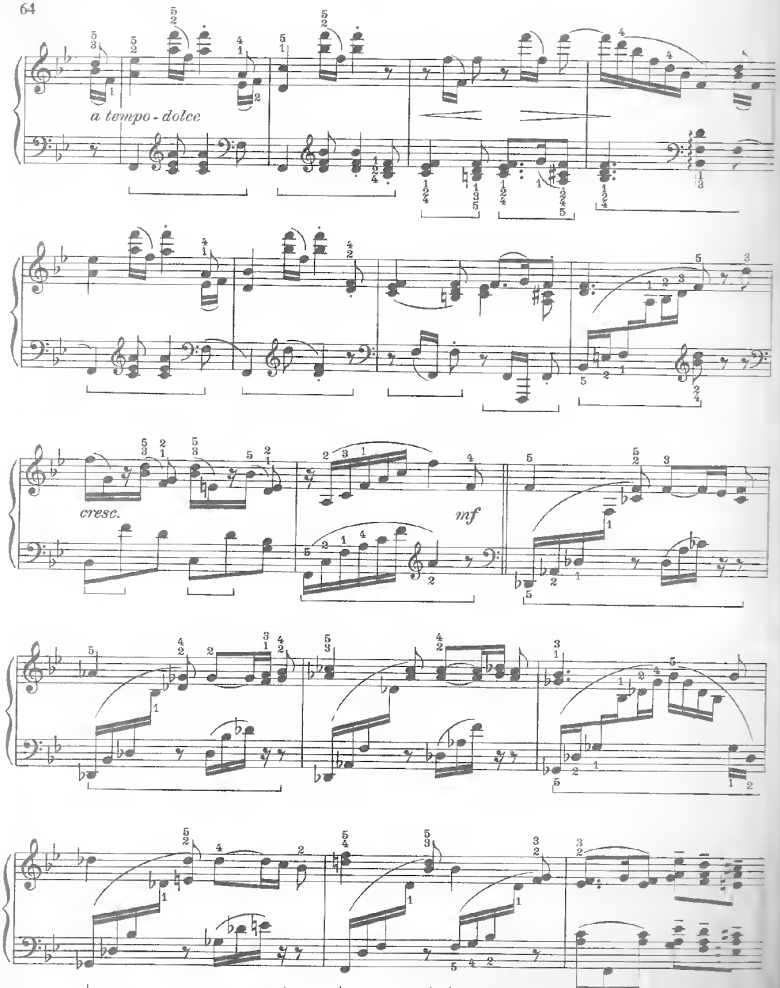
This universally beloved song of Schubert's has had innumerable settings. In difficulty, this arrangement for piano lies somewhere between the Liszt concert transcription and many easier adaptations for early grades. Well played, it becomes a brilliant concert piece.

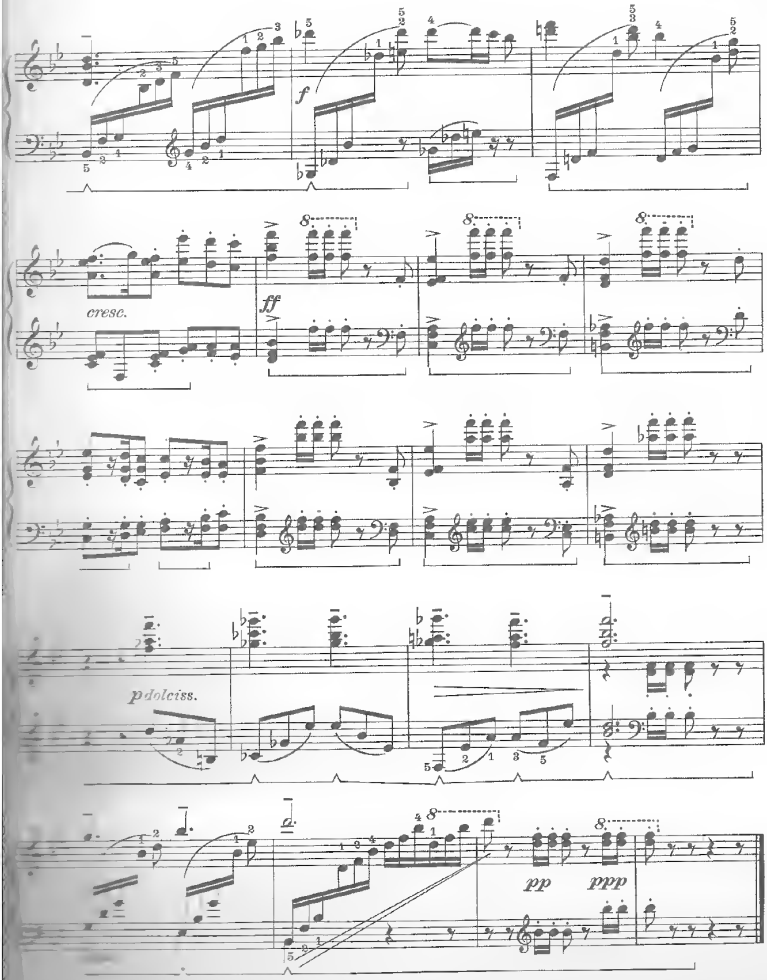
Hark, Hark, the Lark

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)
Transcribed
by J. T.



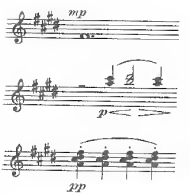

sfz
mf
mf
f
ff
8
dim.
l. h.
poco rit.


a tempo - dolce
cresc.
mf


f
cresc.
ff
p dolciss.
pp
ppp

LESSON ANALYSIS
on
"MAY NIGHT" by PALMGREN

In common with most modern compositions, this number makes rather free use of dissonances to add subtle "seasoning" to harmonic progressions.
The beauty of dissonances can only be achieved by skillful use of the pedal combined with careful *blending* of tones. To avoid discordant effects the dissonant notes must be subdued and never allowed to obtrude upon the harmonic whole. Often a simple four-note chord will require four different tonal values — the prinicipal note being given most prominence and the others tapered off according to their value as part of the harmonic structure. In an example of this sort the dissonant notes almost always have less prominence than the consonant intervals.
Application of this principle occurs in measure 3 of the following composition and should be treated as follows:



The low F♯ in the left hand is a melody tone and must stand out over all other notes in the measure in volume, richness of tone, and in sustaining quality.

This contrapuntal figure (also played by the left hand, crossing over) is second in importance and is treated accordingly.

The harmonic background, played by the right hand, is third in importance and must be played with a thin quality of tone so as to lie *underneath* the tonal values of the other two voices.

The distinction between voices must be easily discernible and all the notes in the measure kept within definite tonal limits so that the pedal can be sustained throughout without causing an unpleasant blur.

This treatment is in force throughout the entire piece. Therefore, to insure proper interpretation, observe the following:

Pedal exactly as marked.

Give the best possible singing tone to notes marked with the sostenuto sign, thus, 𝄐

Make a wide distinction between melody tones and the chord accompaniment, and allow the little contrapuntal figures to lie somewhere between the two in importance.

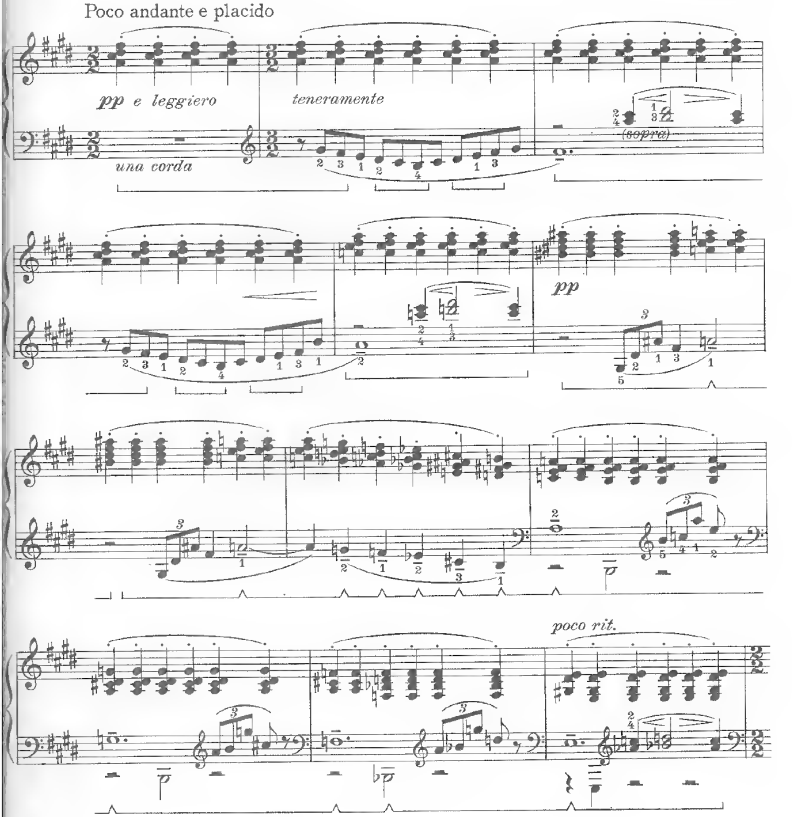
The more dissonances included in one sustained use of the pedal, the more care is needed in the matter of tonal delicacy and balance.

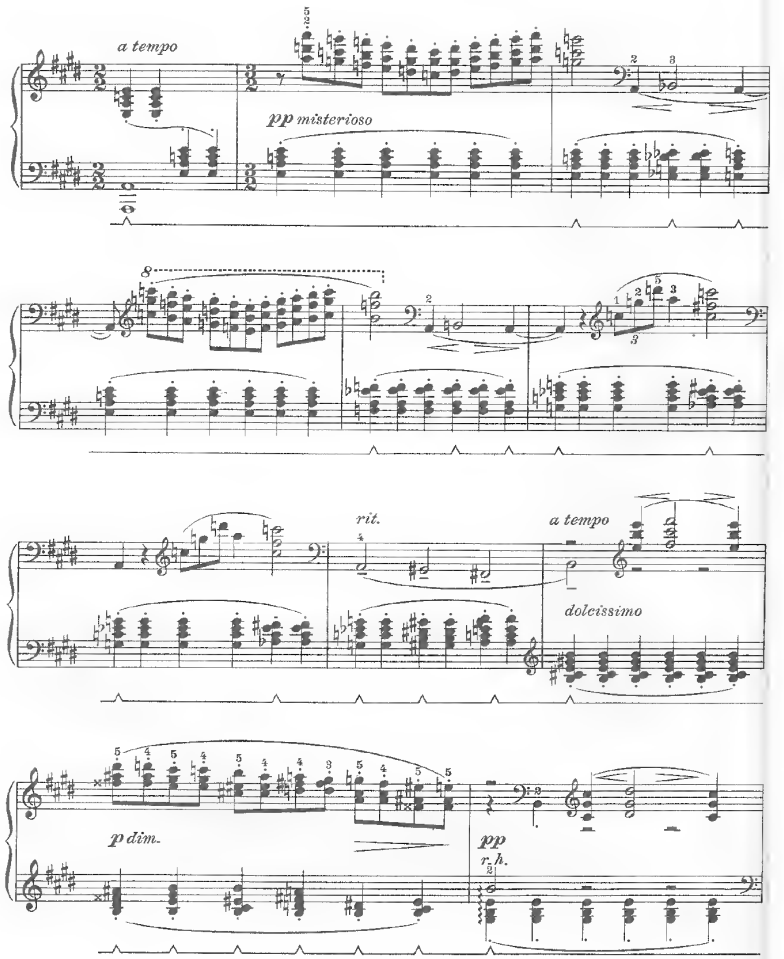
Selim Palmgren has been called "the Finnish Chopin." He was born in Björneborg, Finland in 1878, studied at the Conservatory in Helsingfors, and afterward in Berlin with Ansorge, Berger and Busoni. He was well known in Scandinavian countries as a pianist, composer and conductor. He was a notable representative of the modern school of Finnish composers, and his "May Night" has been called "A little masterpiece of impressionism."

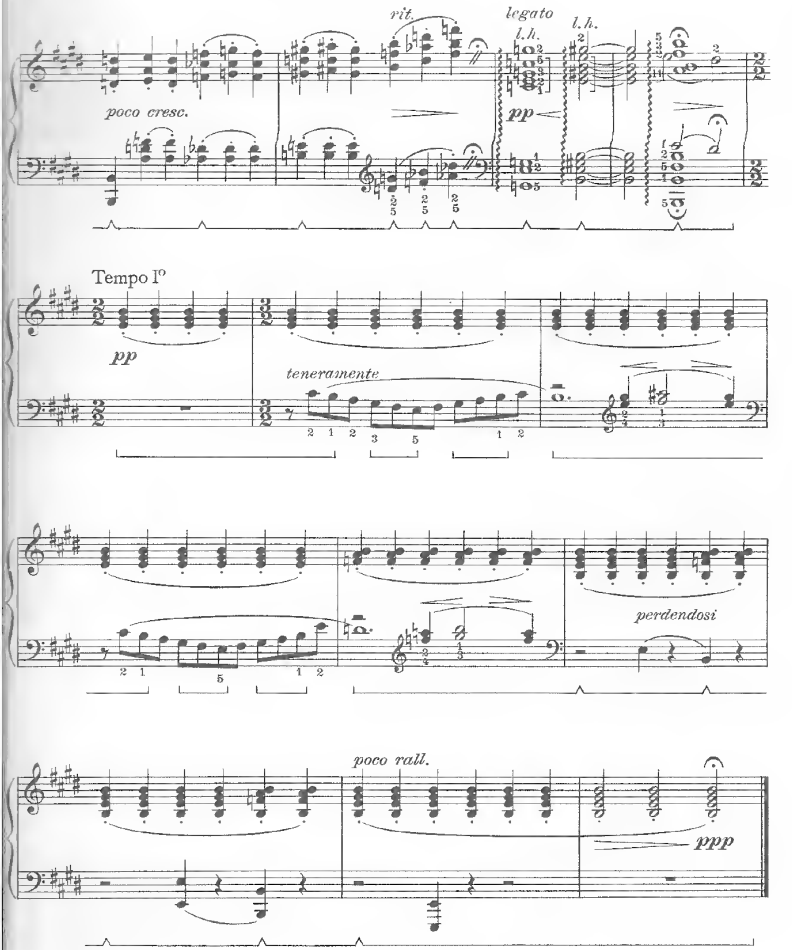
May-Night

Selim Palmgren
(1878-1951)

Poco andante e placido




a tempo
pp misterioso
rit.
a tempo
dolcissimo
p dim.
pp
r. h.


rit.
legato
l.h.
l.h.
poco cresc.
pp
Tempo I°
pp
teneramente
perdendosi
poco rall.
ppp

To Laurence B. Ellert

Paraphrase on

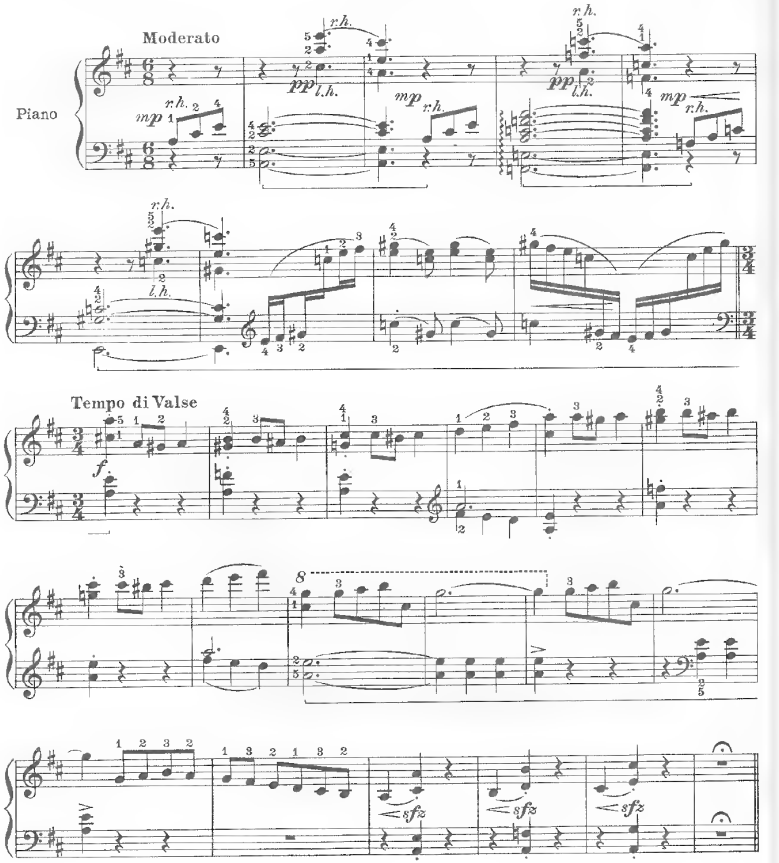
The Beautiful Blue Danube

Waltzes

by

Johann Strauss

John Thompson



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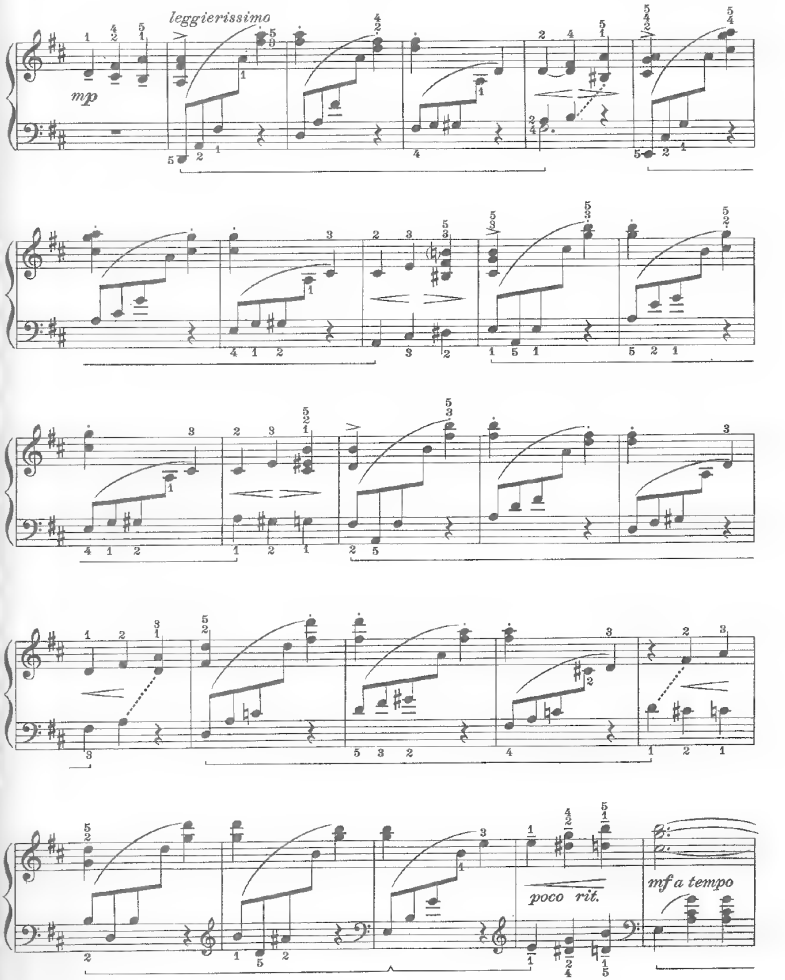
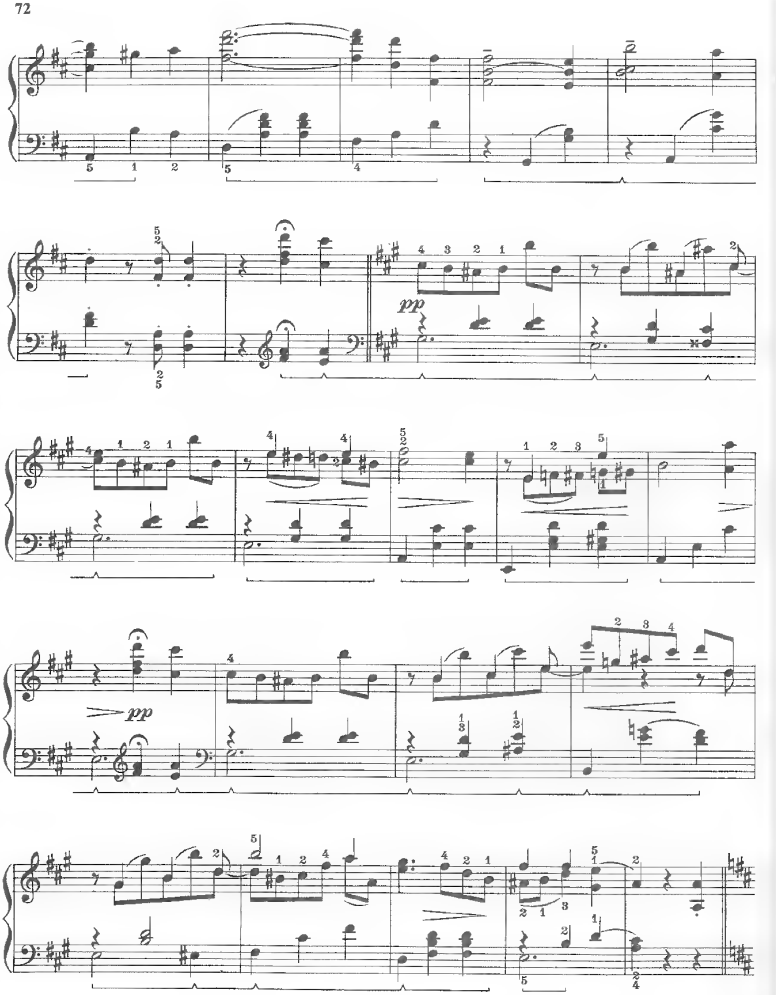
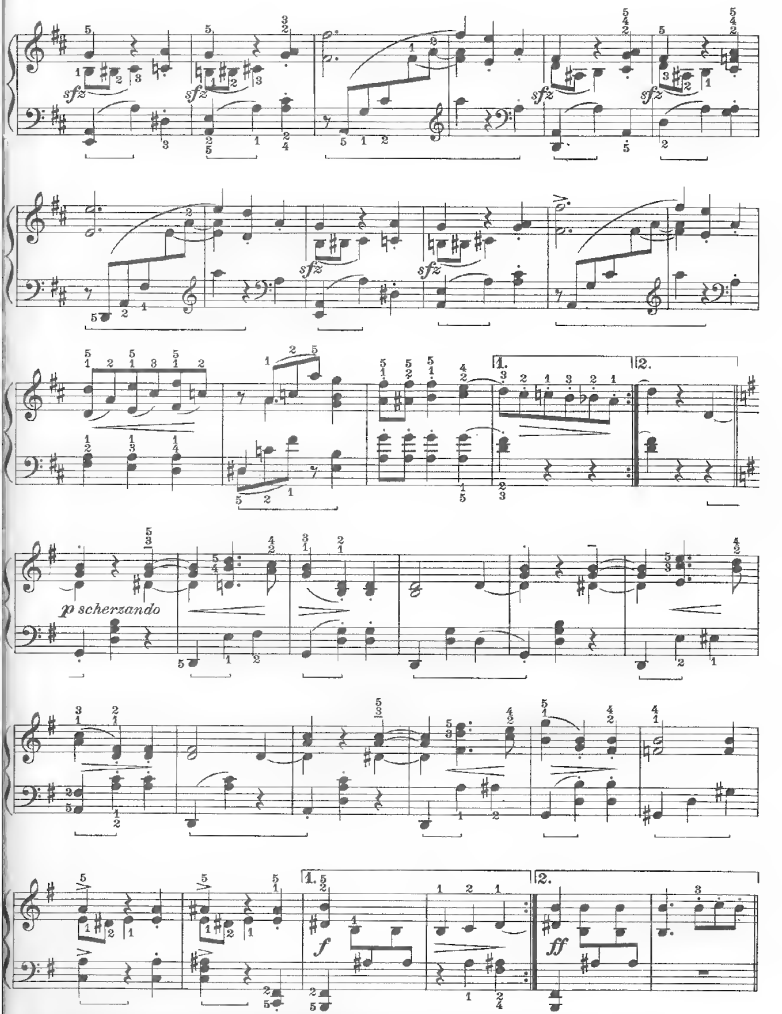
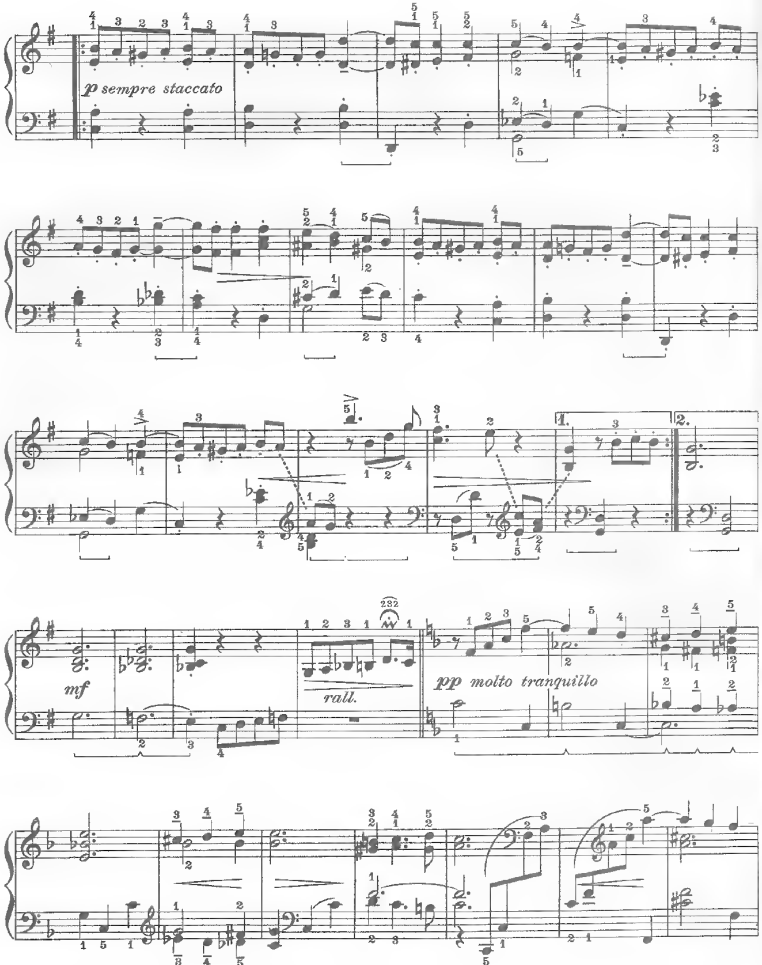
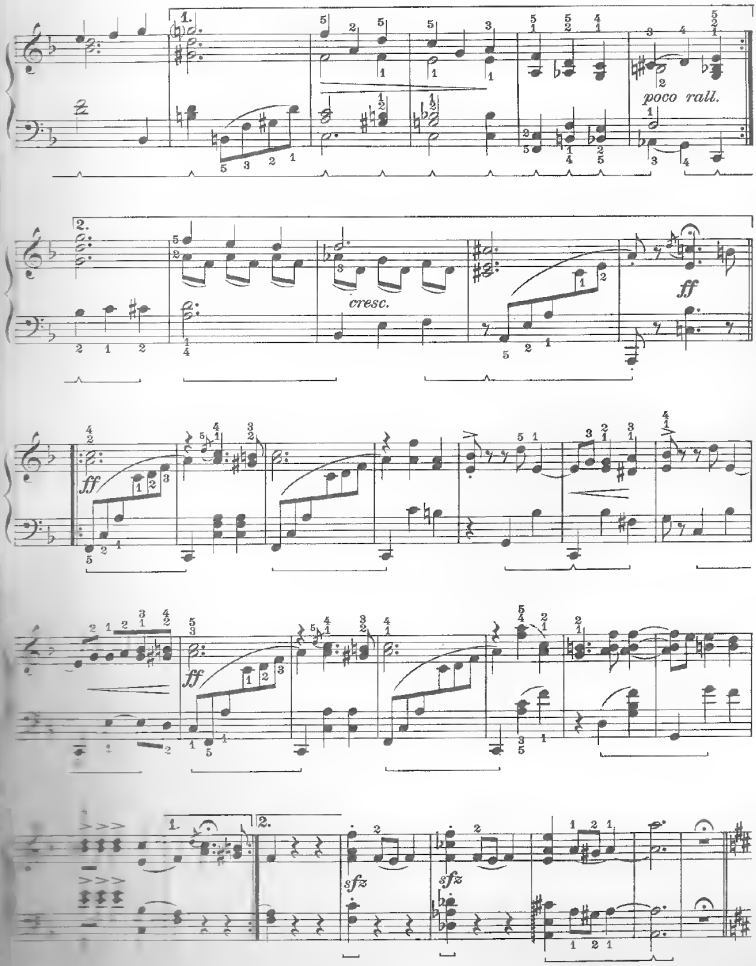
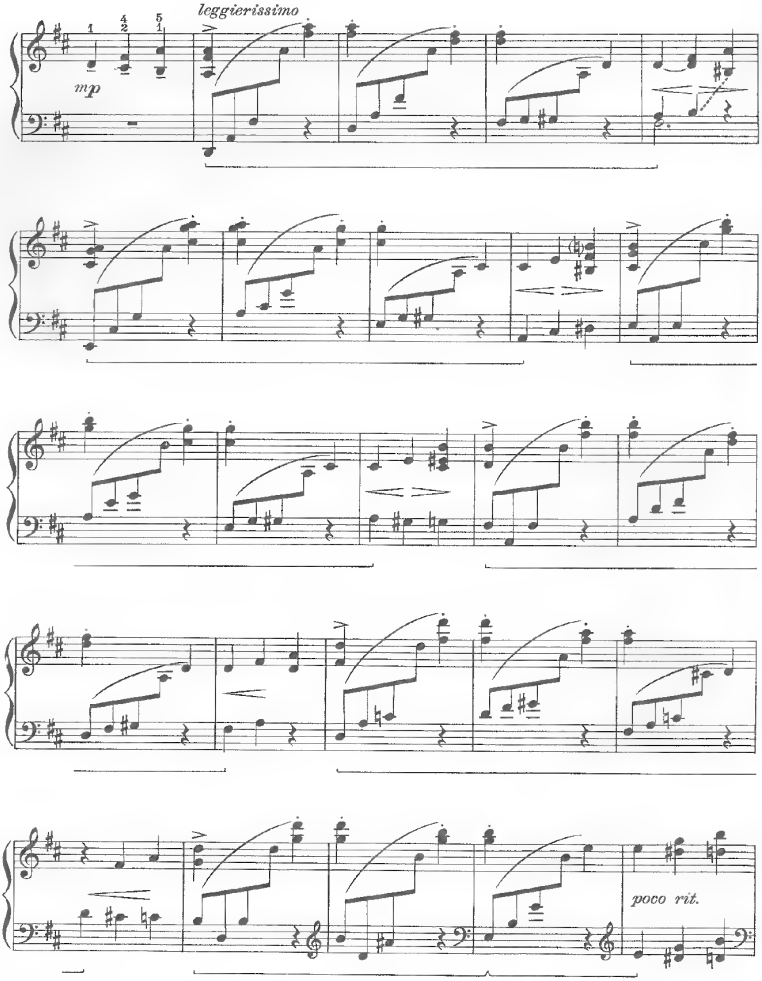

leggierissimo
mp
poco rit.
mf a tempo

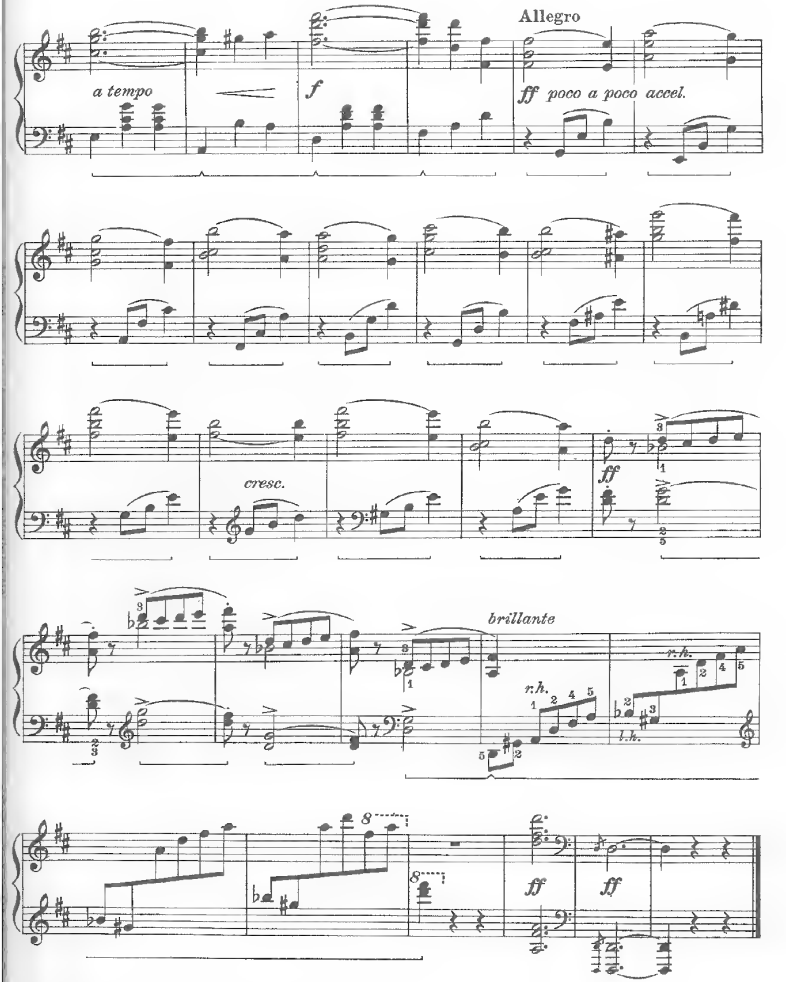

pp
pp


sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
1.
2.
p scherzando
f
1.
2.
ff


p sempre staccato
mf
rall.
pp molto tranquillo


poco rall.
cresc.
ff
ff
ff
sfz
sfz


leggierissimo
mp
poco rit.

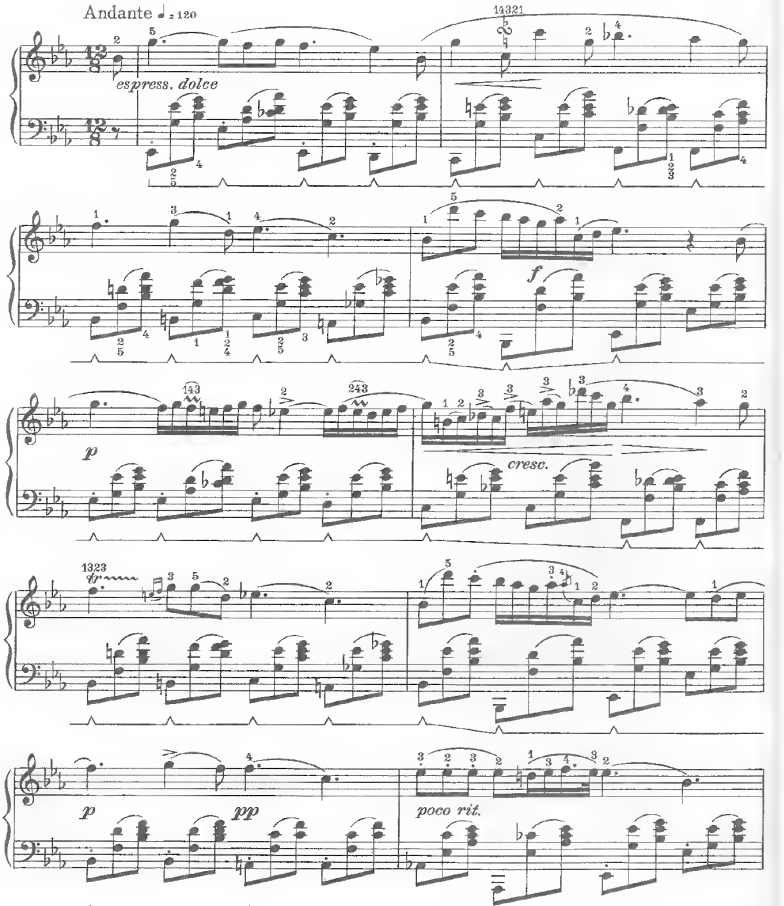

Allegro
a tempo
f
ff poco a poco accel.
cresc.
ff
brillante
r.h.
l.h.
8
ff
ff

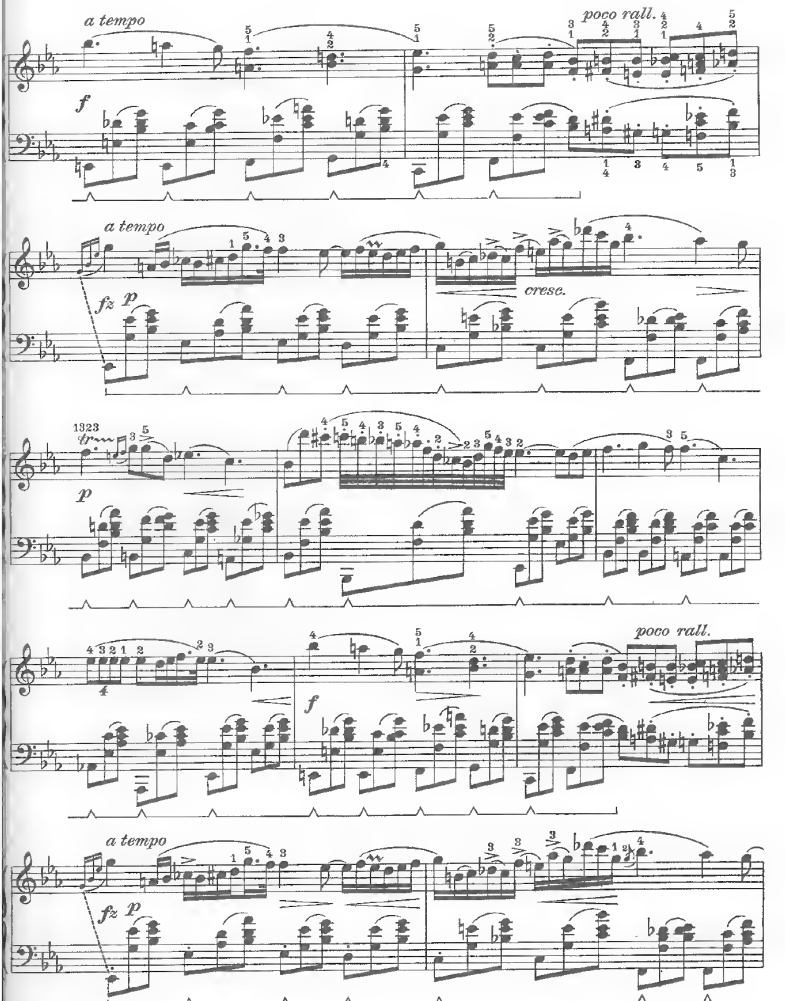
A Madame Camille Pleyel

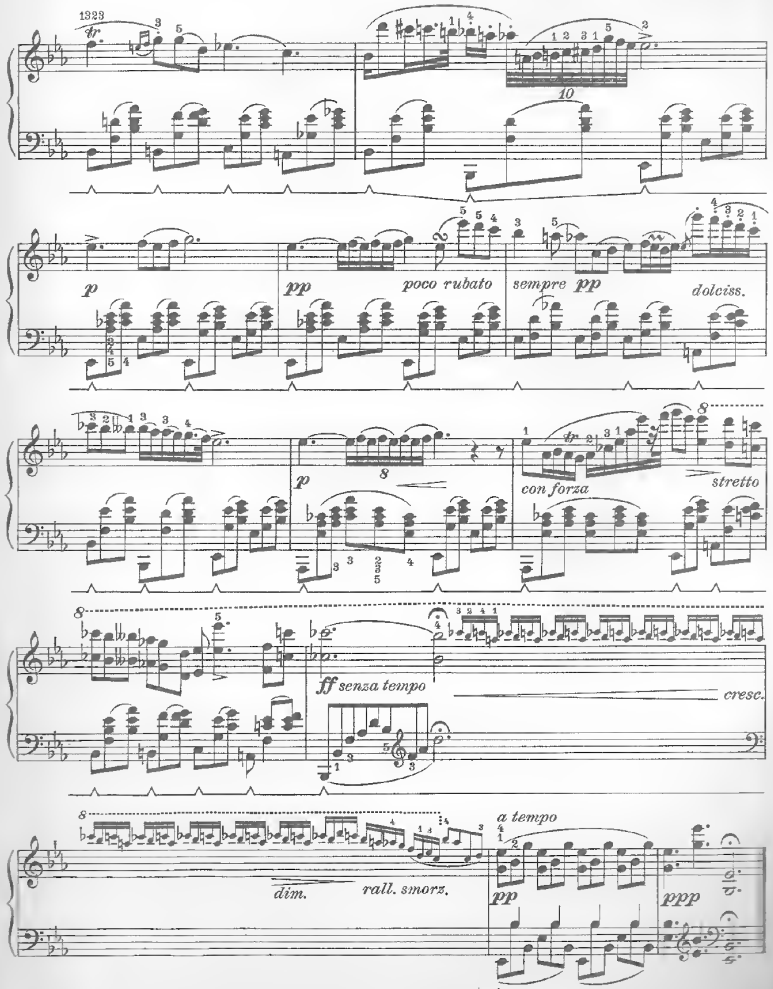
Nocturne in E flat

Op. 9, No. 2

Frédéric Chopin
(1810-1849)




a tempo
poco rall.
f
a tempo
fz p
cresc.
p
poco rall.
f
a tempo
fz p

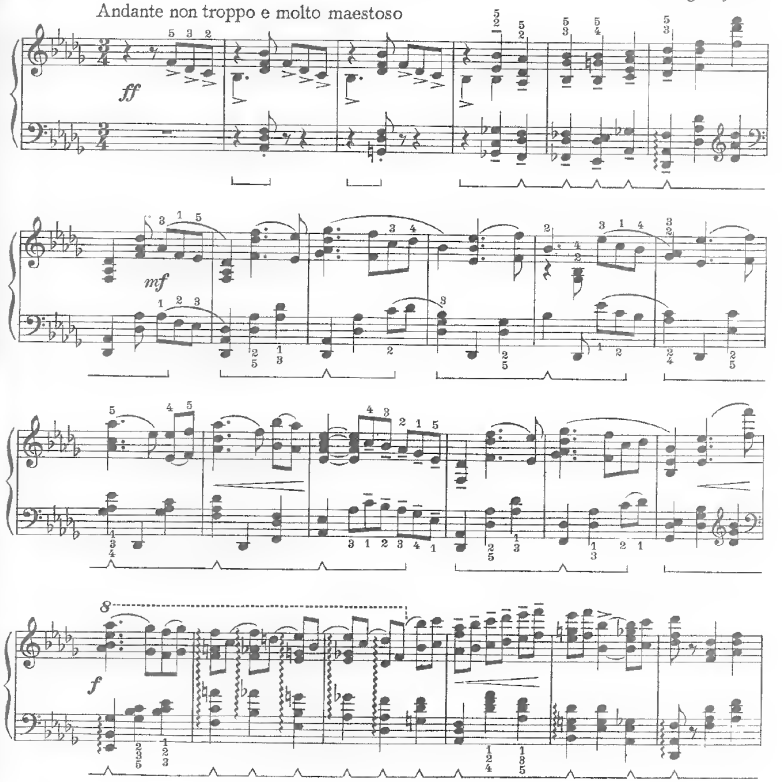

tr
10
p
pp
poco rubato
sempre pp
dolciss.
p
con forza
stretto
ff senza tempo
cresc.
dim.
rall. smorz.
a tempo
pp
ppp

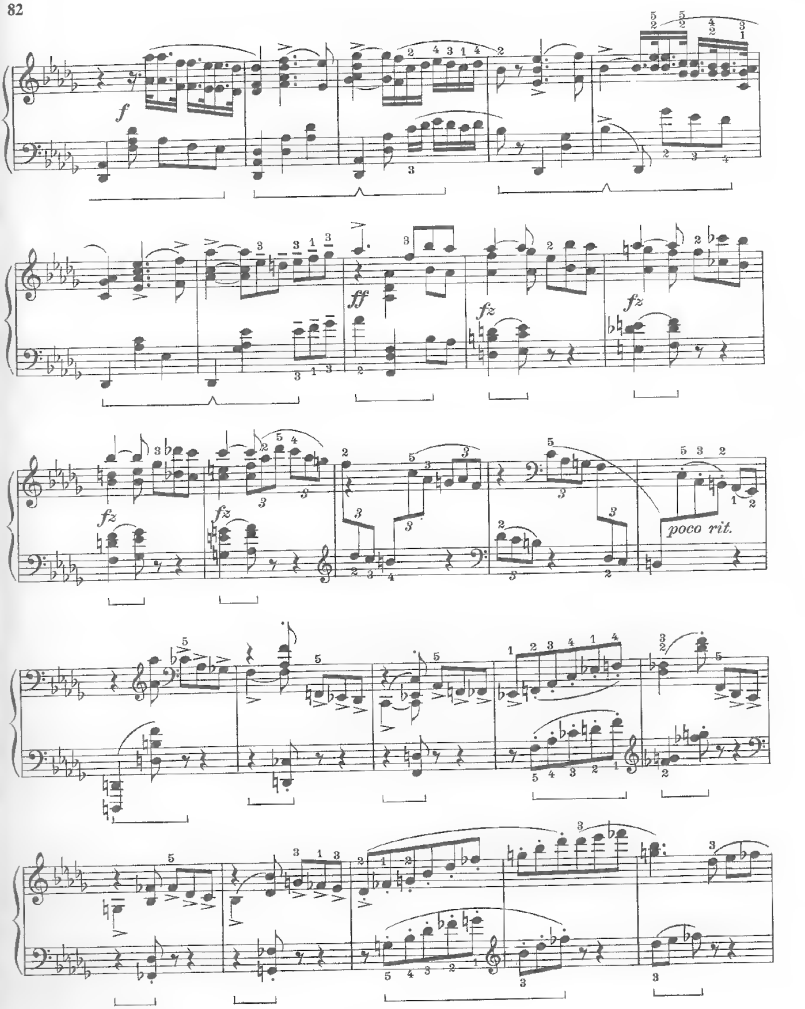
This very 'condensed' version of the opening theme from Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 makes available both the piano and orchestral parts to be played as a solo. Students of the FIFTH GRADE BOOK should be looking forward to a not-too-distant day when this famous concerto in its original version can be added to their repertoire.

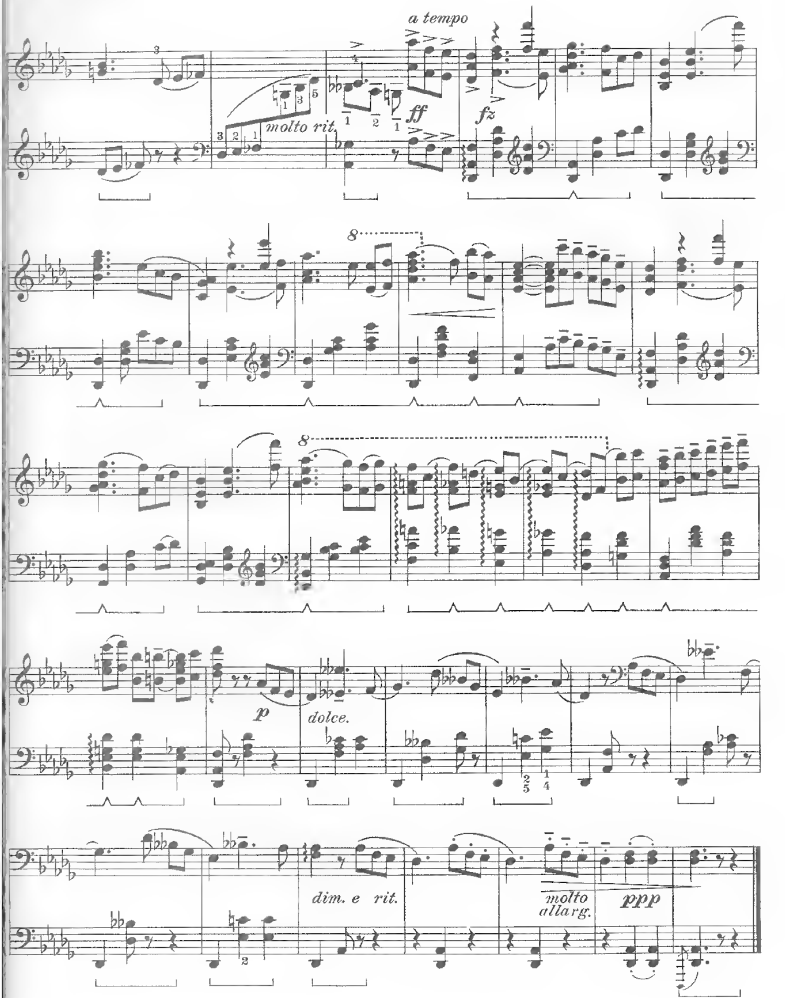
Opening Theme

from Piano Concerto No. 1

P. I. Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)
Arranged by J. T.




f
ff
fz
fz
fz
fz
poco rit.


a tempo
molto rit.
ff
fz
8
8
p
dolce.
dim. e rit.
molto allarg.
ppp

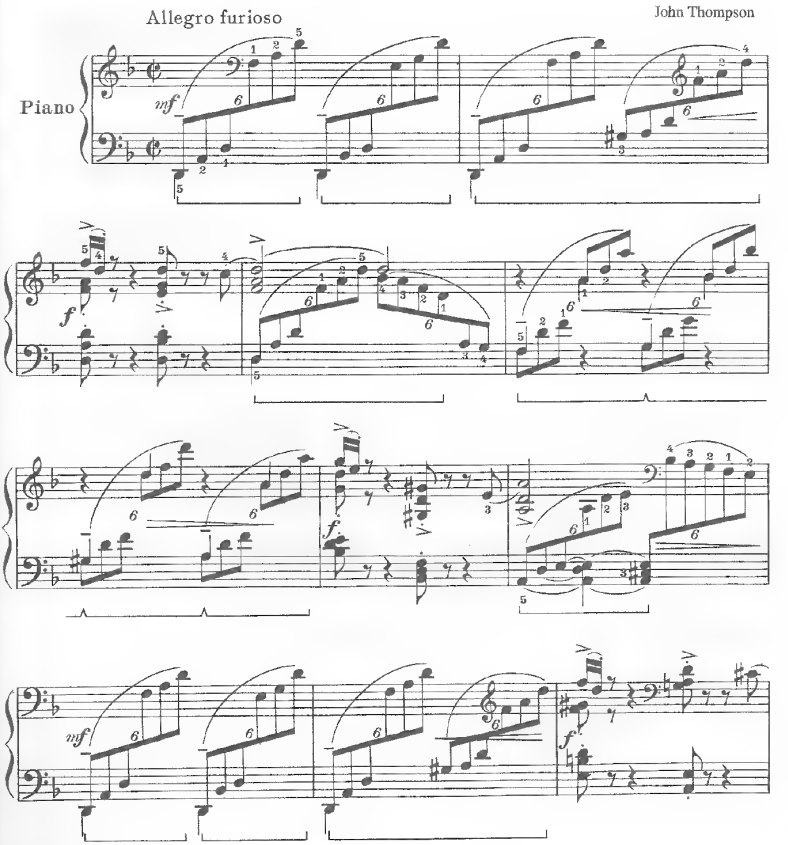
The first section of this little program piece is reminiscent of the roaring torrents of the Scottish Highlands, and the middle section is so martial in character as to suggest a March of the Highland Chiefs. Play throughout in descriptive style.

to Mrs. Earl T. Western

A Scottish Highland Scene

Allegro furioso

John Thompson



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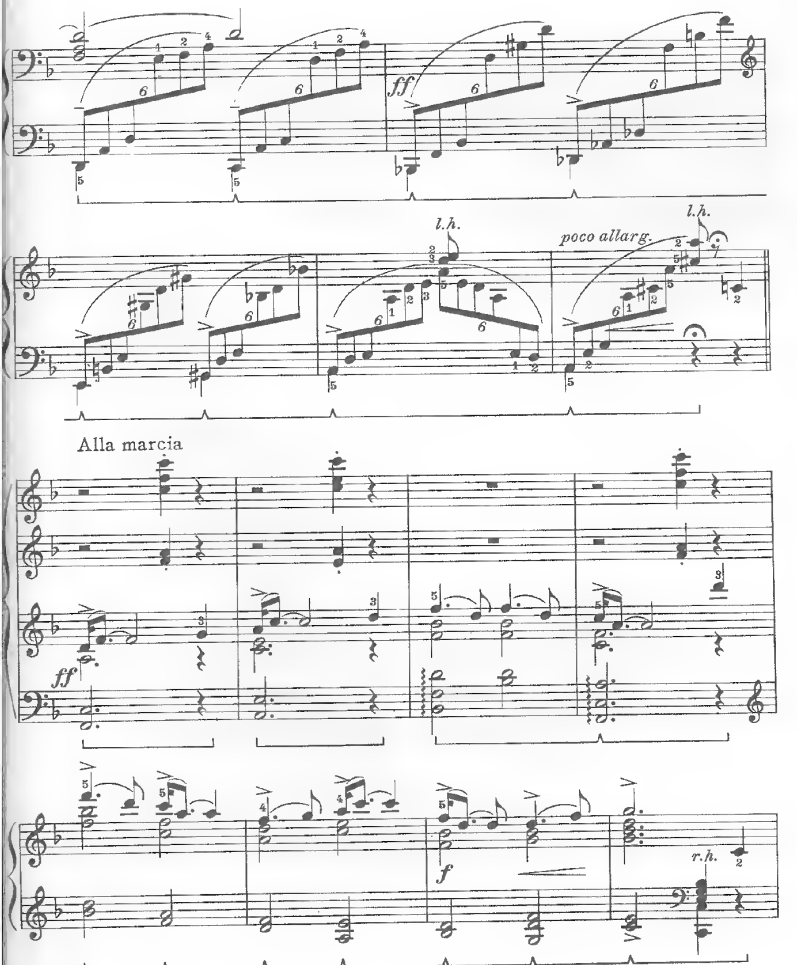
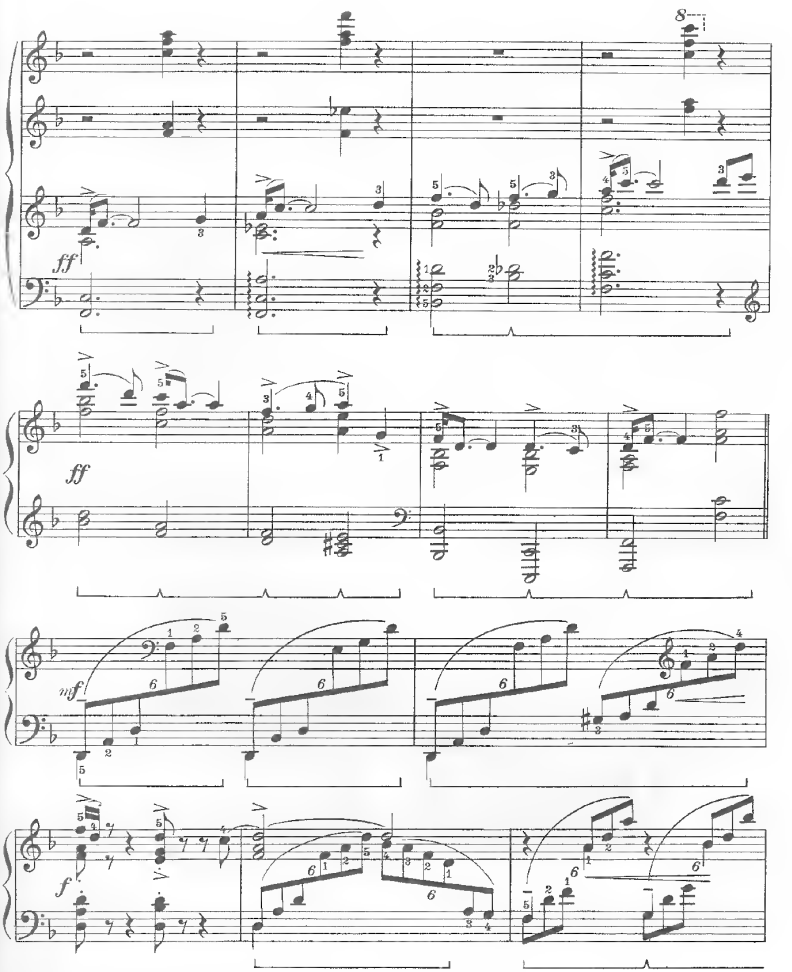
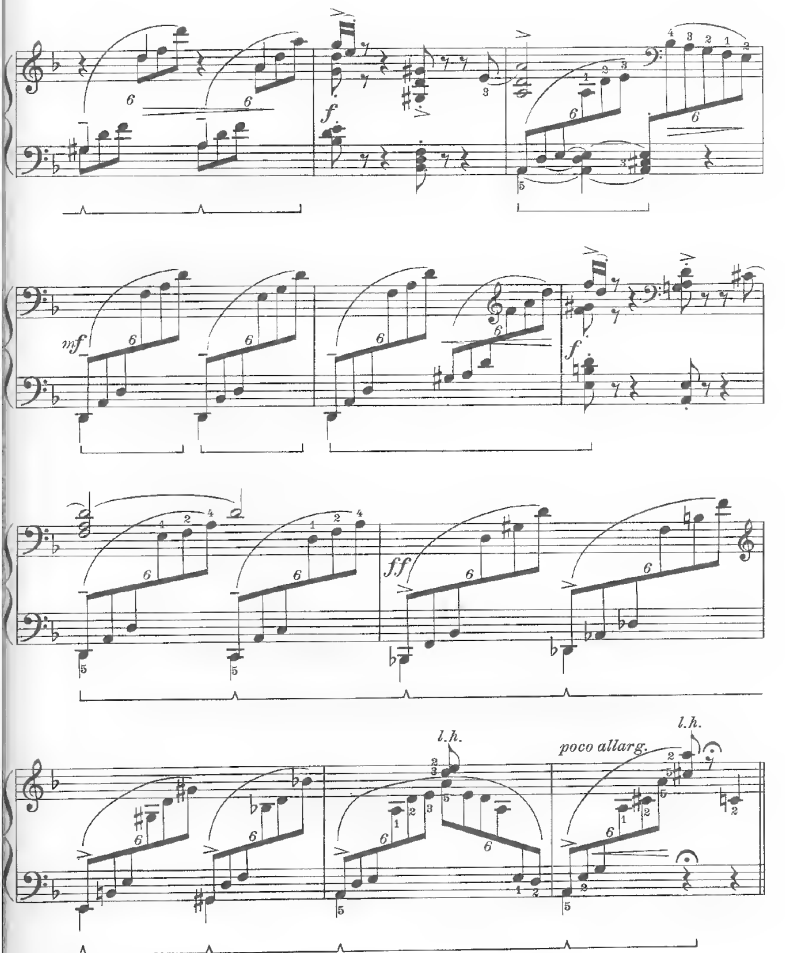
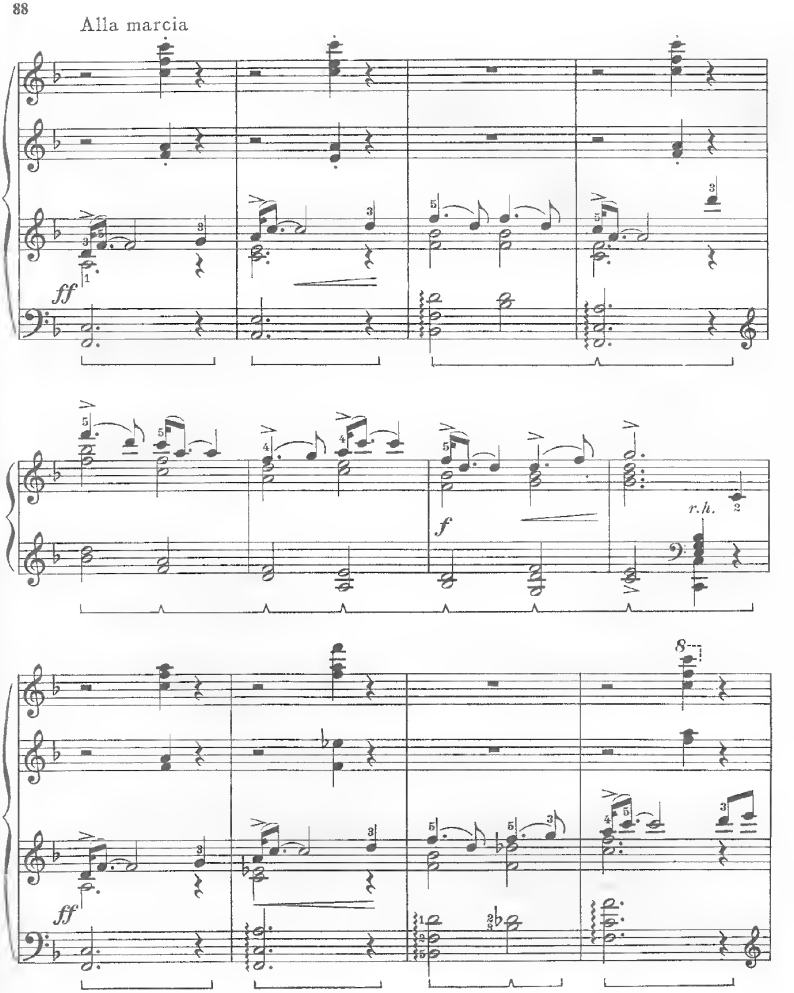
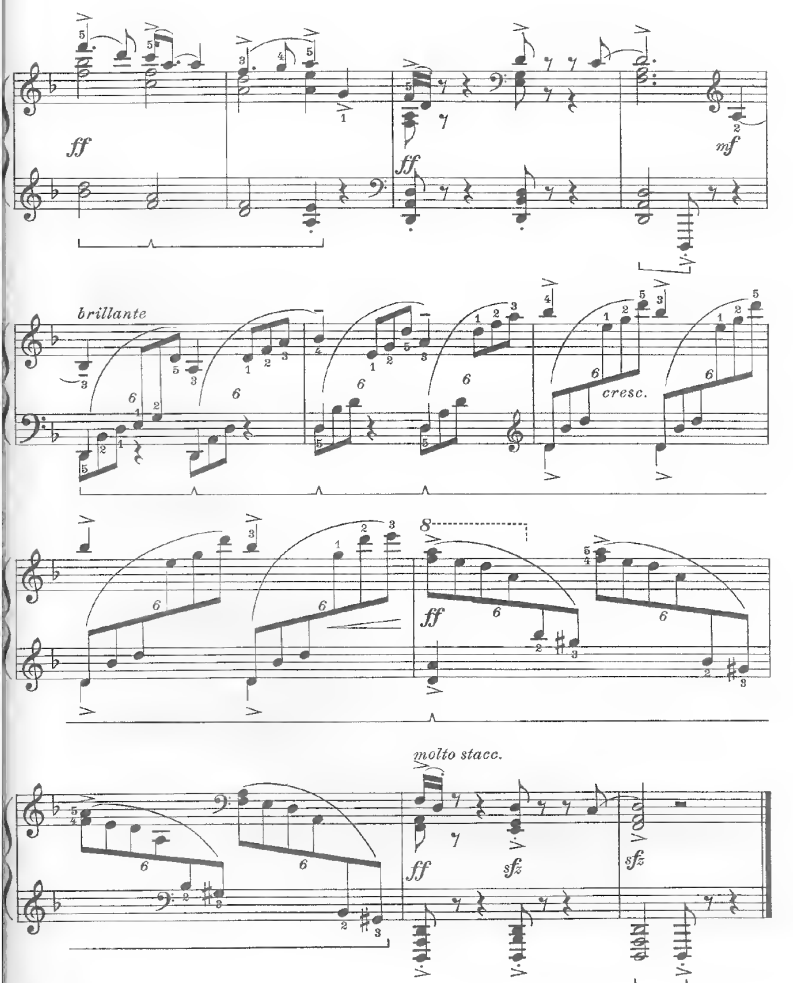

ff
l.h.
poco allarg.
l.h.
Alla marcia
ff
f
r.h.


8
ff
ff
mf
f


f
mf
f
ff
l.h.
poco allarg.
l.h.

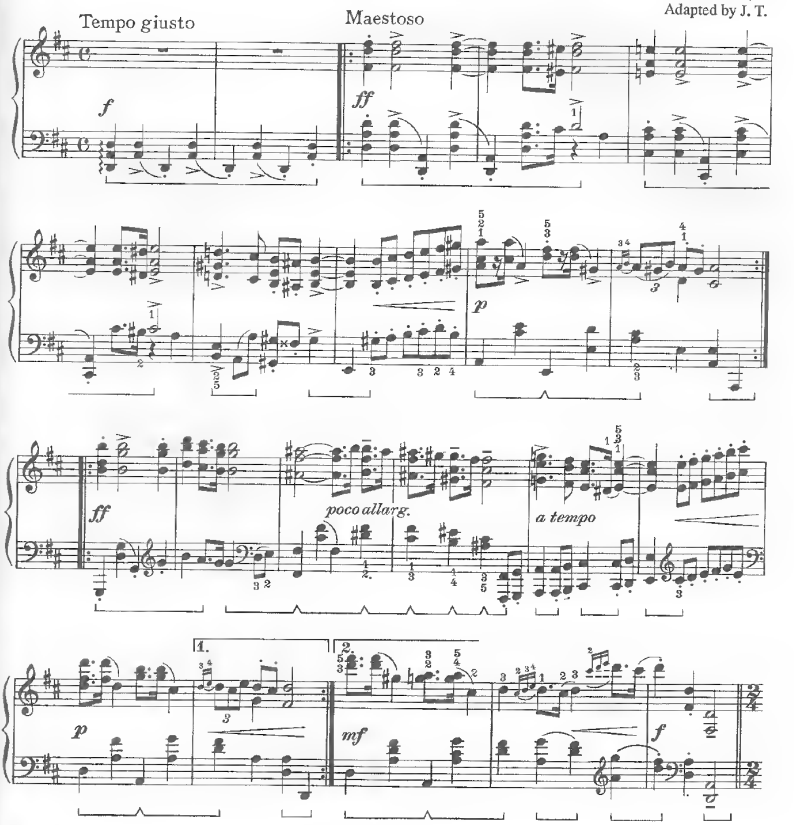

Alla marcia
ff
f
r.h.
8
ff

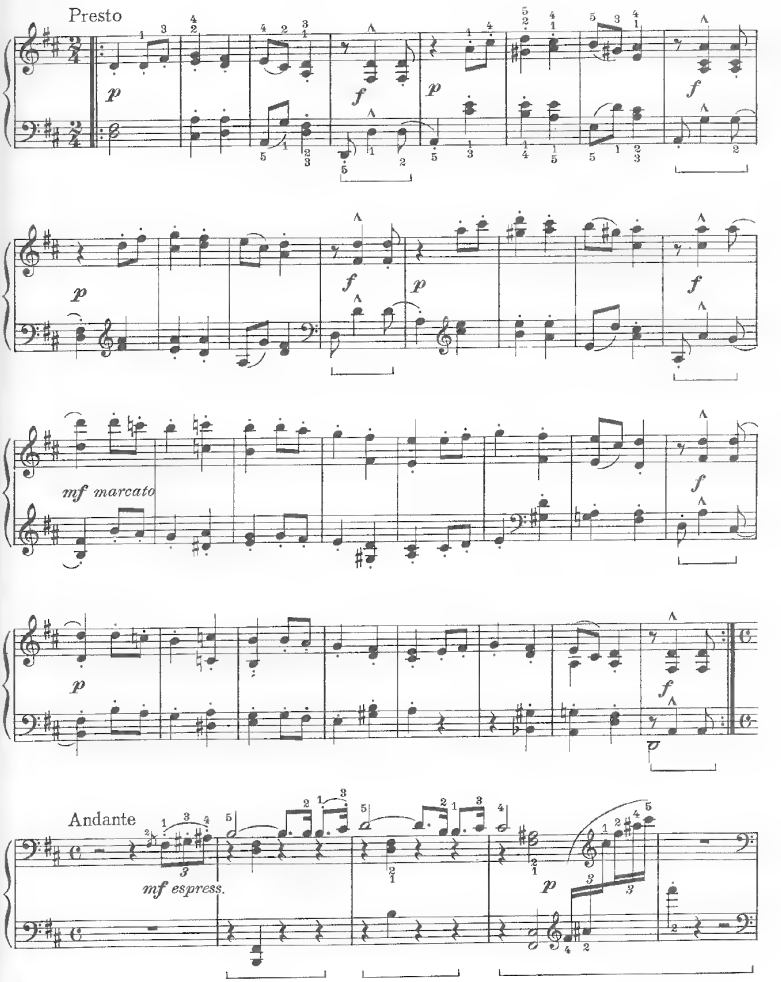

ff
ff
mf
brillante
cresc.
ff
molto stacc.
ff
sfz
sfz

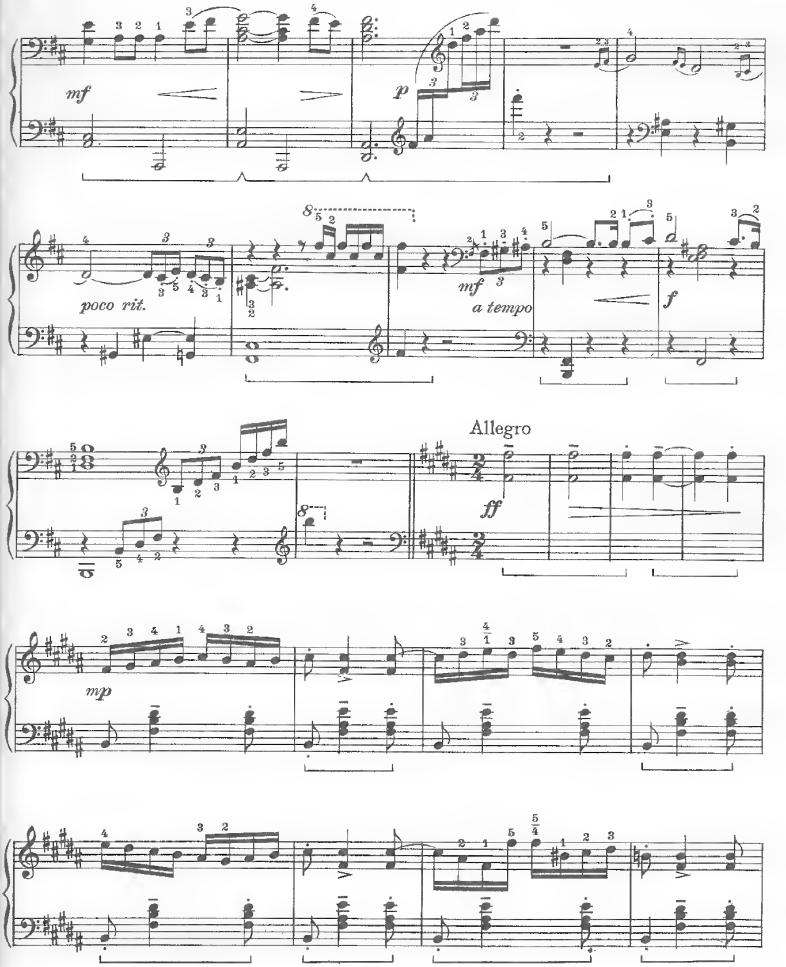
Franz Liszt composed fifteen rhapsodies built upon traditional songs or dance airs of the romantic gypsies of Hungary. Number Six, a general favorite, has been especially adapted for inclusion in this book.

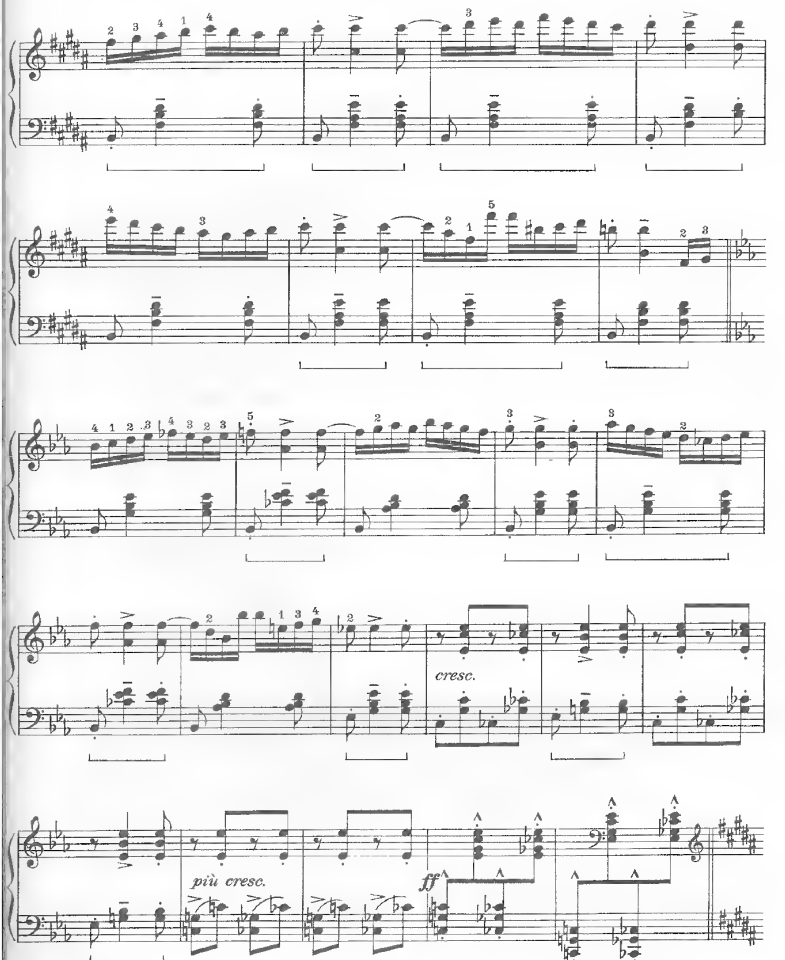
Hungarian Rhapsodie, No. 6

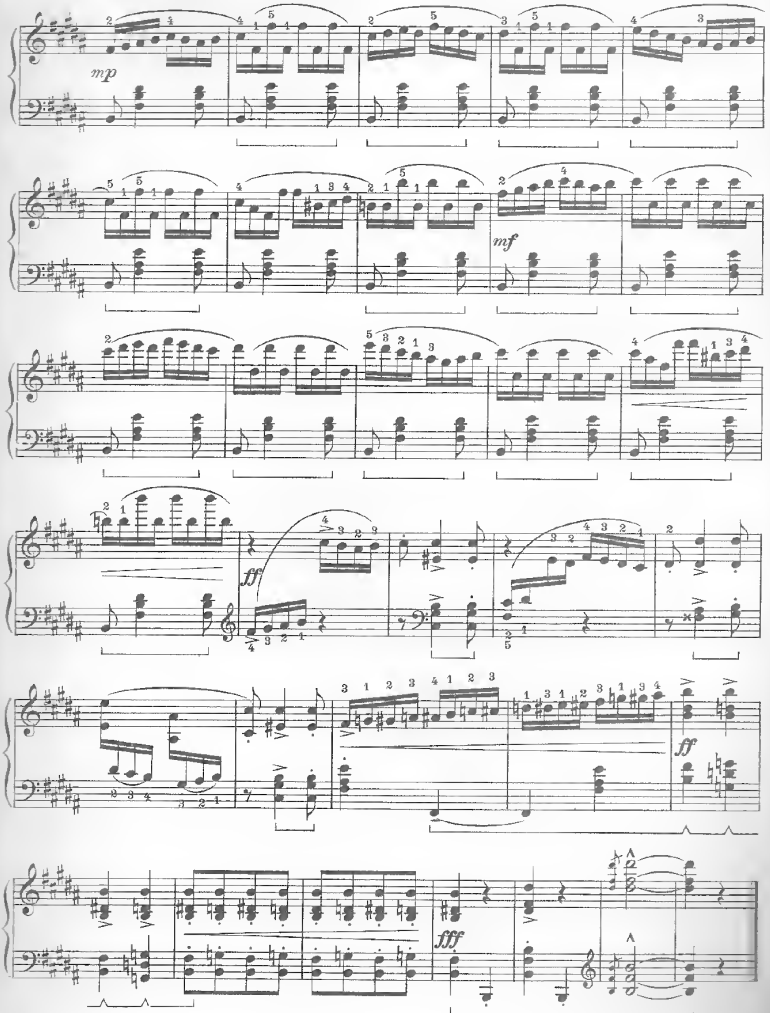
Franz Liszt
(1811-1886)
Adapted by J. T.




Presto
p
f
p
f
p
f
p
f
mf marcato
f
p
f
Andante
mf espress.
p


mf
p
poco rit.
mf
a tempo
f
Allegro
ff
mp

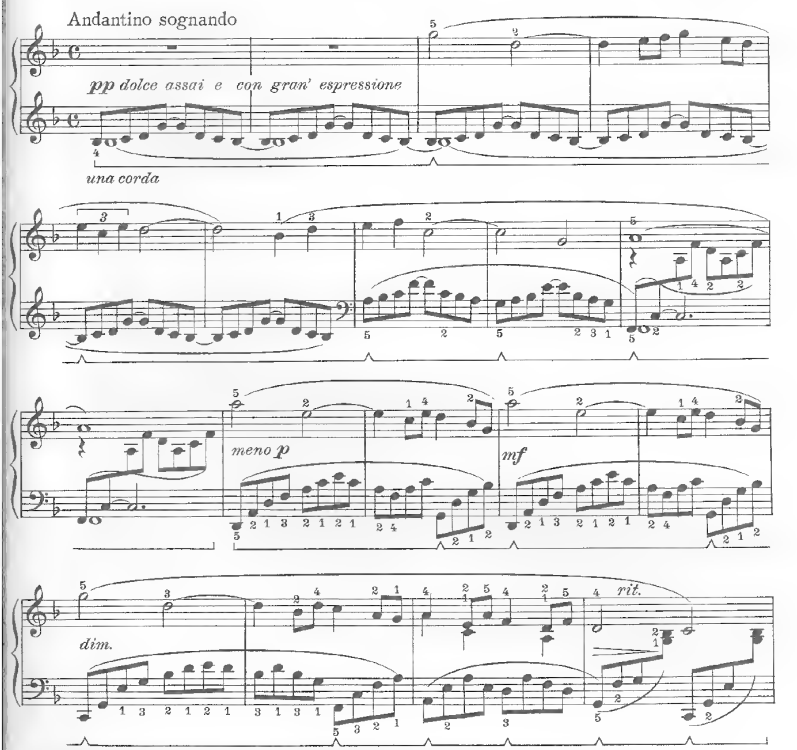

cresc.
più cresc.
ff

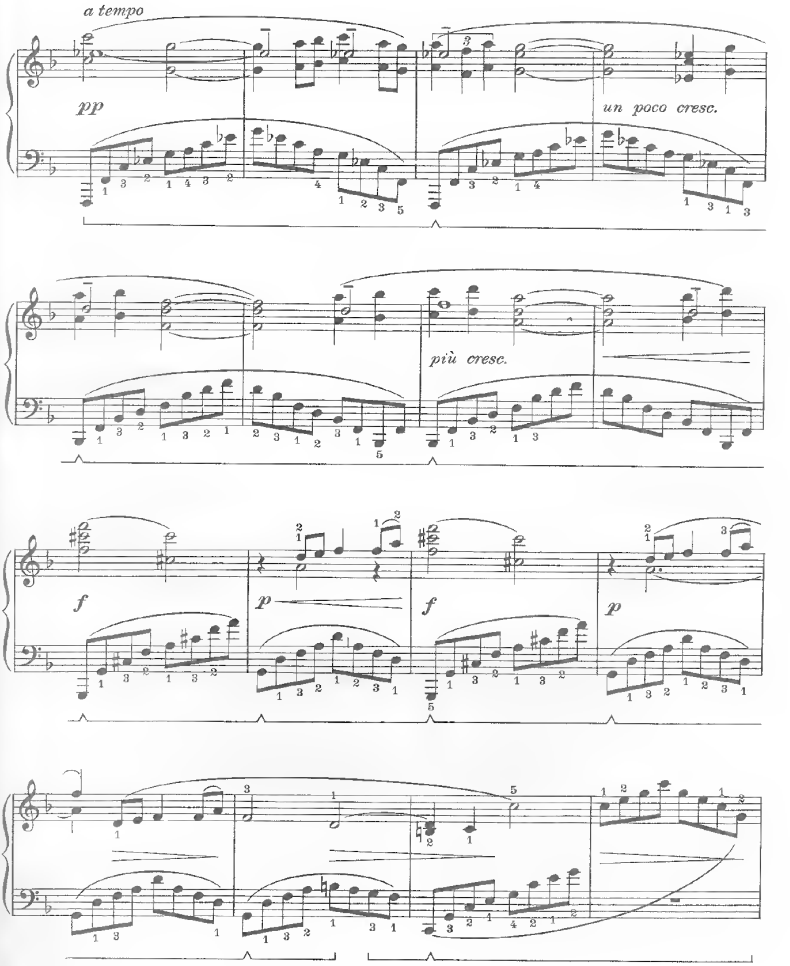

mp
mf
ff
ff
fff

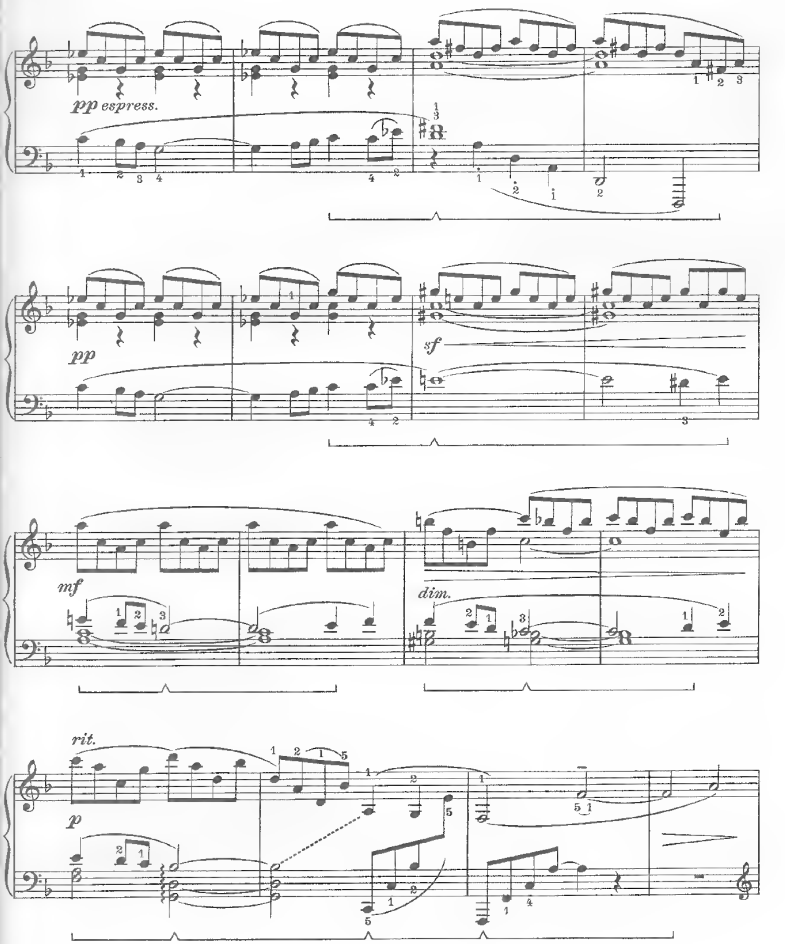
In the case of a modern composition such as this beautiful "Rêverie" by Debussy, it is impossible to indicate exact pedaling. Much depends upon the natural endowment of the individual pianist, his ability to balance tonal values of the several voices, discrimination in *blending* dissonances, and the inherent quality and quantity of tone available in the piano which happens to be in use.
In view of these considerations, the pedal markings in this edition are not arbitrary, but should serve as a general guide to the performer.
USEFUL HINTS:
When the 'blur' seems too pronounced, take a fresh pedal.
Endeavor to control tone *quality* and *quantity* to a degree that allows the pedal to be sustained as long (or nearly as long) as indicated.
Review paragraph on USE OF THE PEDAL, Page 66.

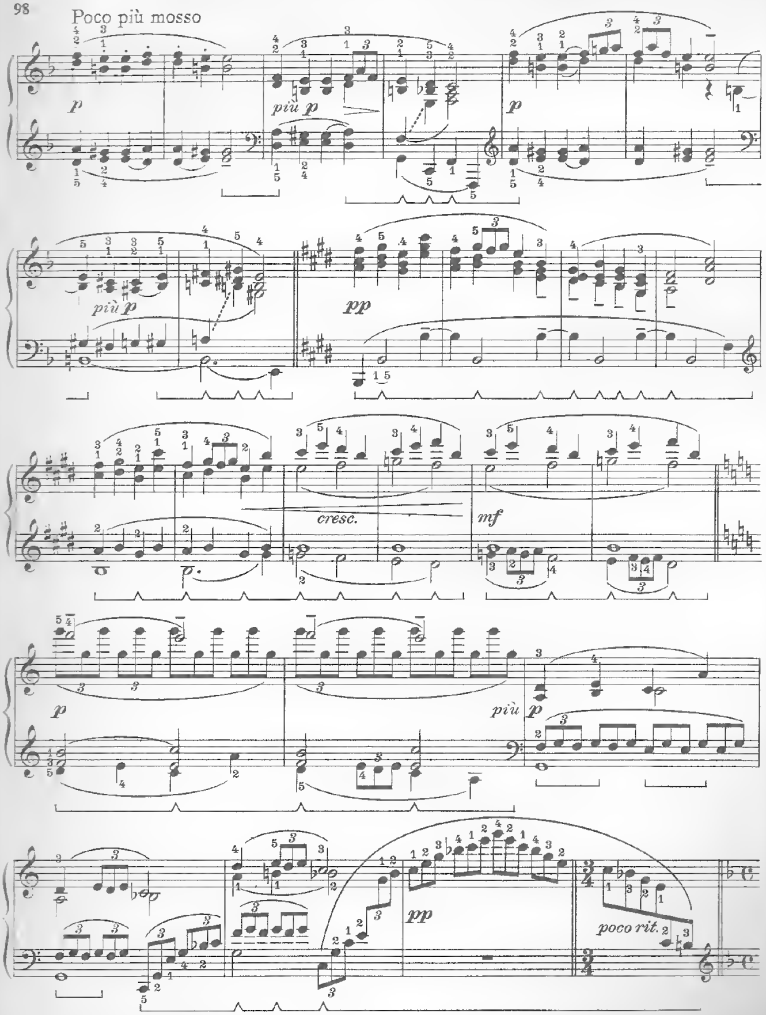
Rêverie

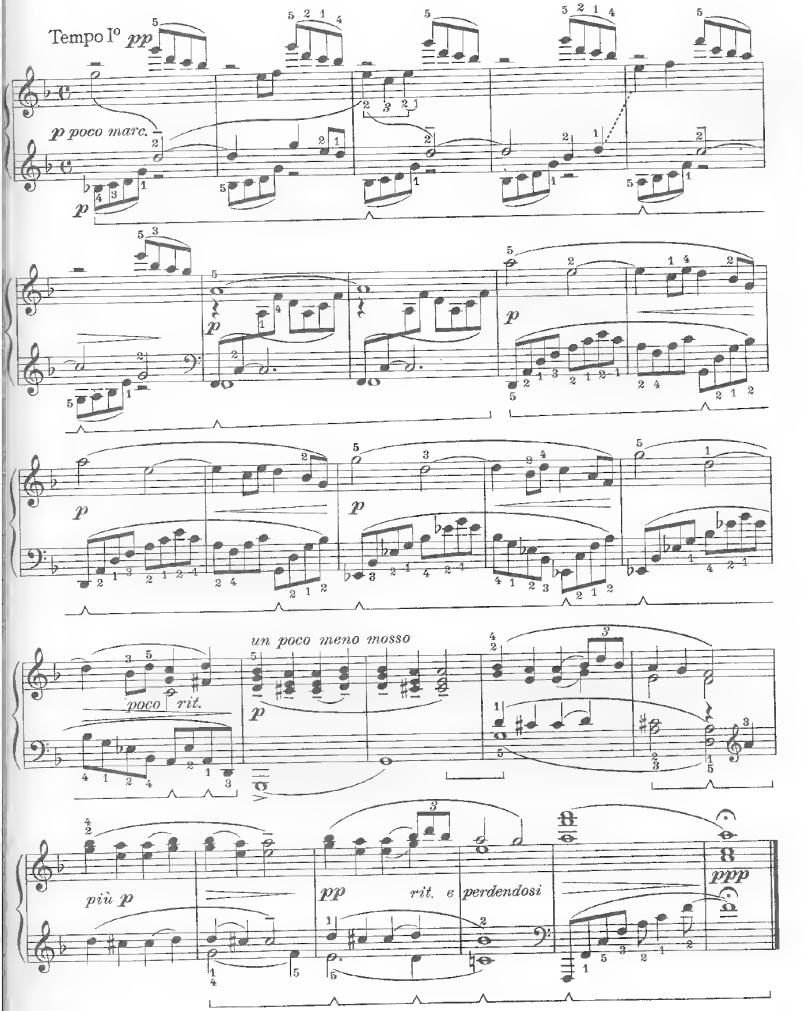
Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)




a tempo
pp
un poco cresc.
più cresc.
f
p
f
p

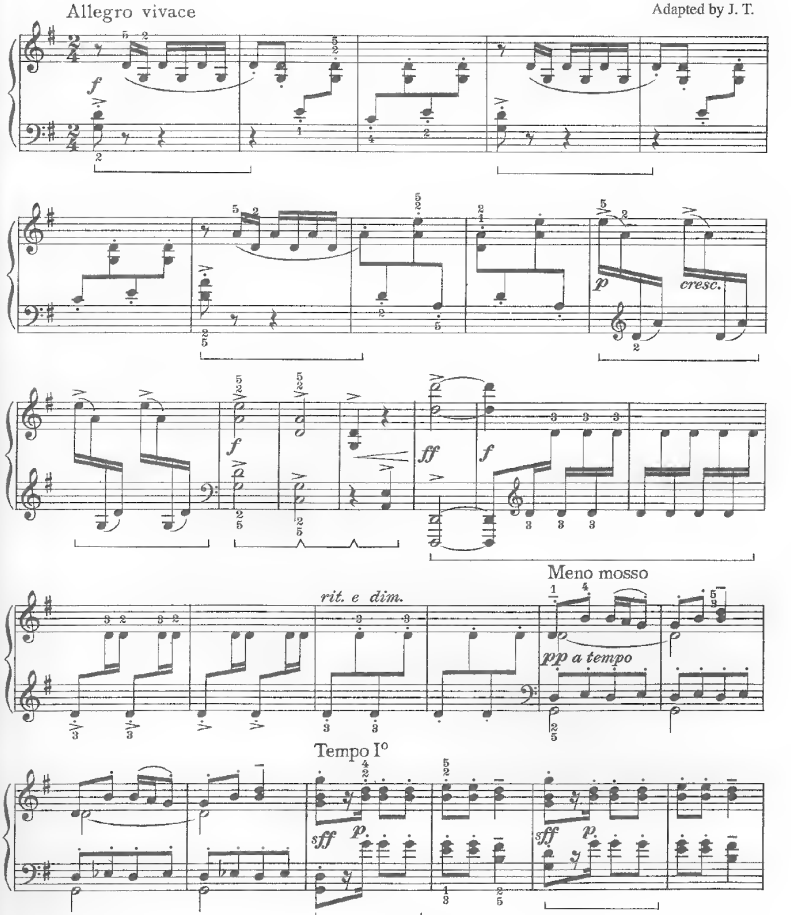

pp espress.
pp
sf
mf
dim.
rit.
p

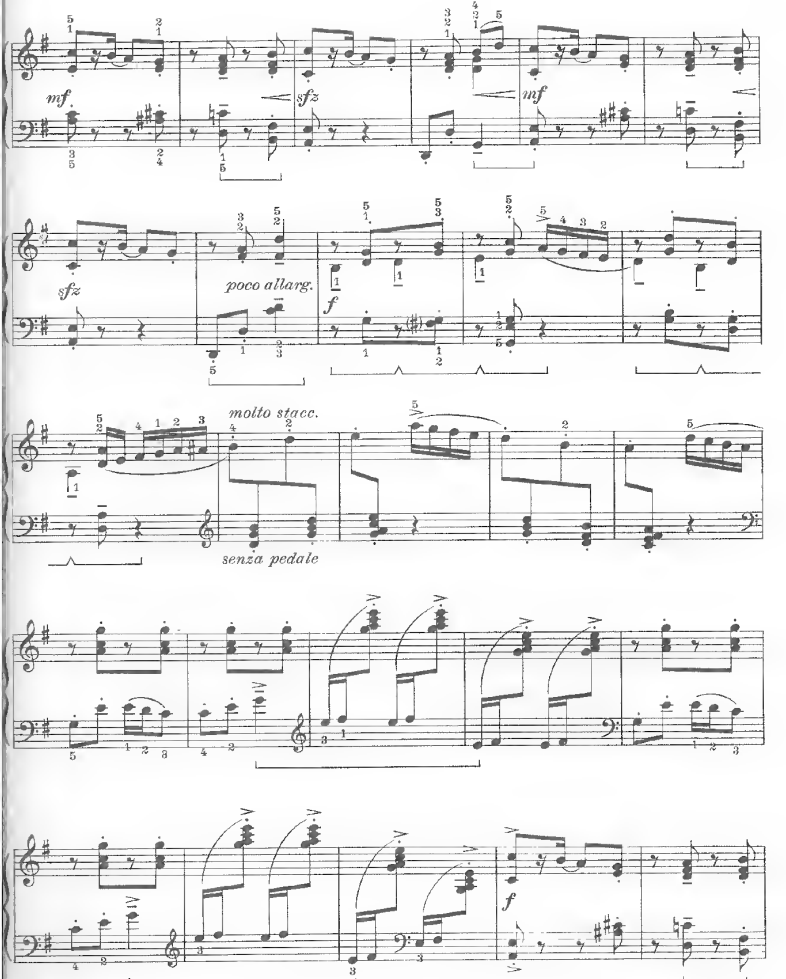

Poco più mosso
p
più p
p
più p
pp
cresc.
mf
p
più p
pp
poco rit.

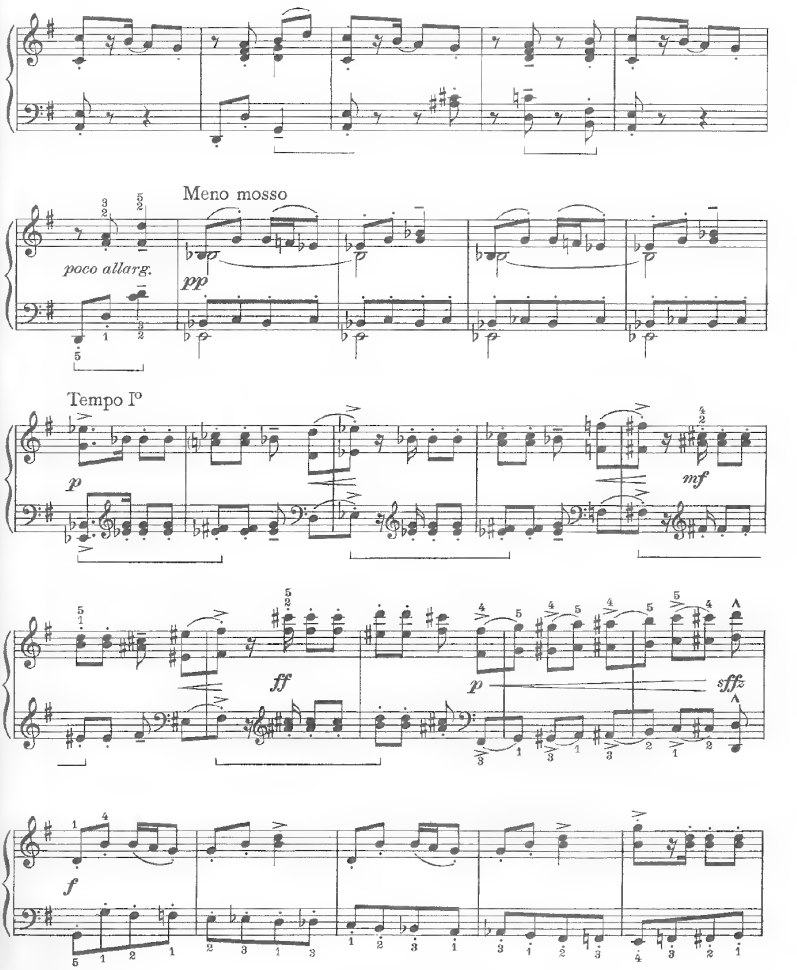

Tempo I° pp
p poco marc.
p
p
p
p
un poco meno mosso
poco rit.
più p
pp
rit. e perdendosi
ppp

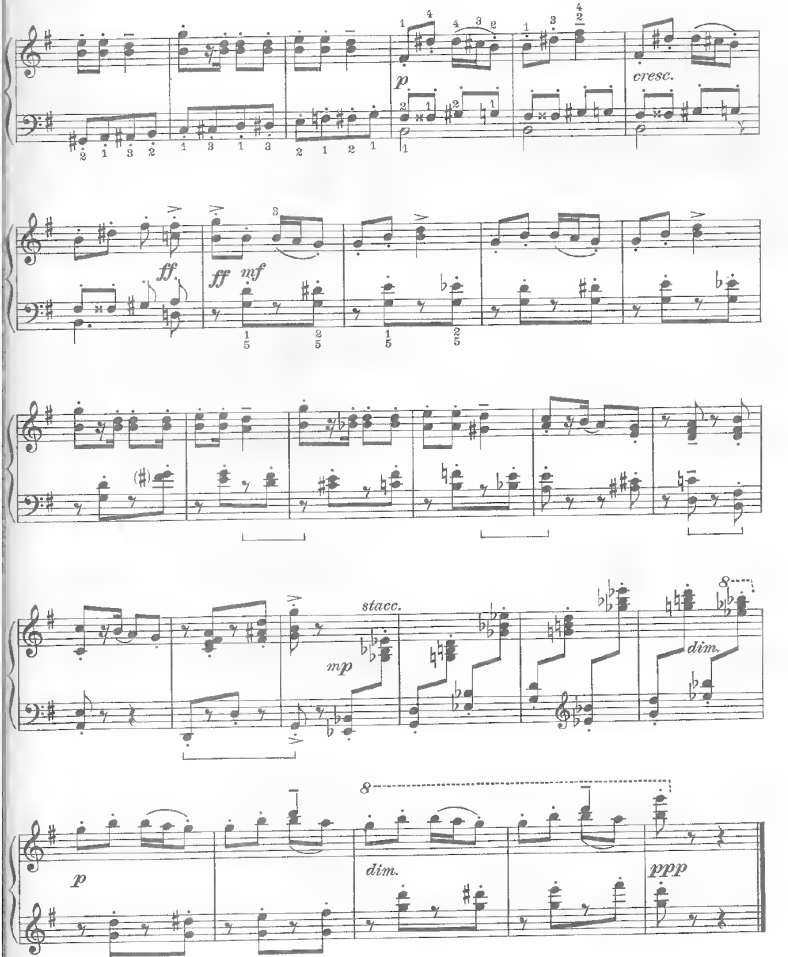
Hopak

M. Moussorgsky
(1839-1881)
Adapted by J. T.




mf
sfz
mf
sfz
poco allarg.
f
molto stacc.
senza pedale
f


Meno mosso
poco allarg.
pp
Tempo I°
p
mf
ff
p
sffz
f

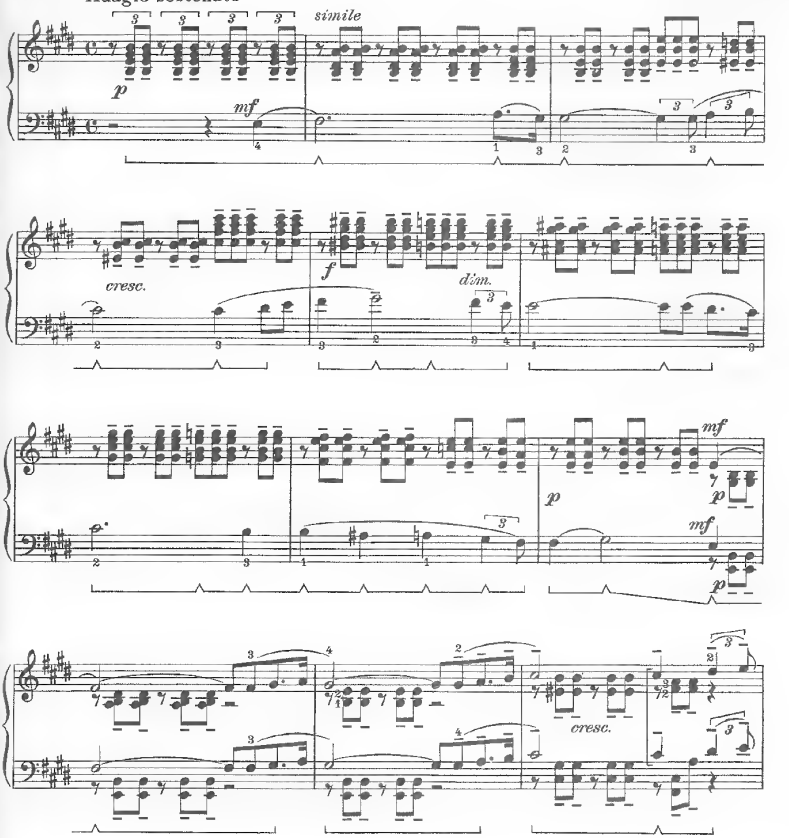

p
cresc.
ff
ff
mf
stacc.
mp
dim.
8
p
dim.
ppp

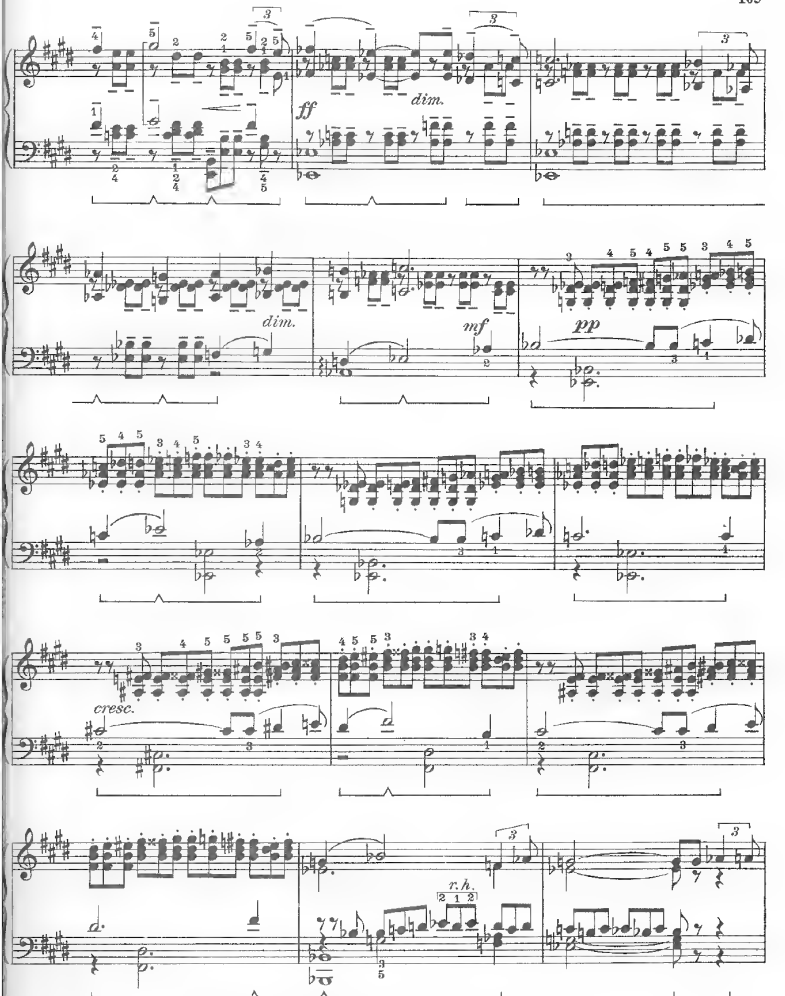
Melodie

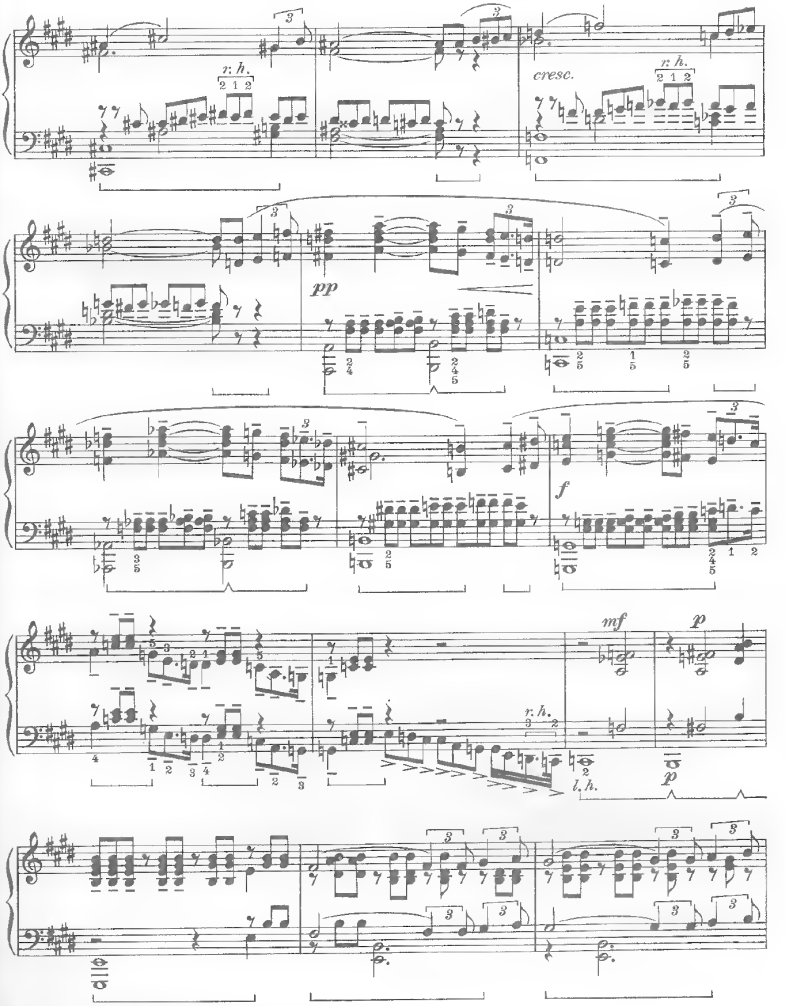
Op. 3, No. 3

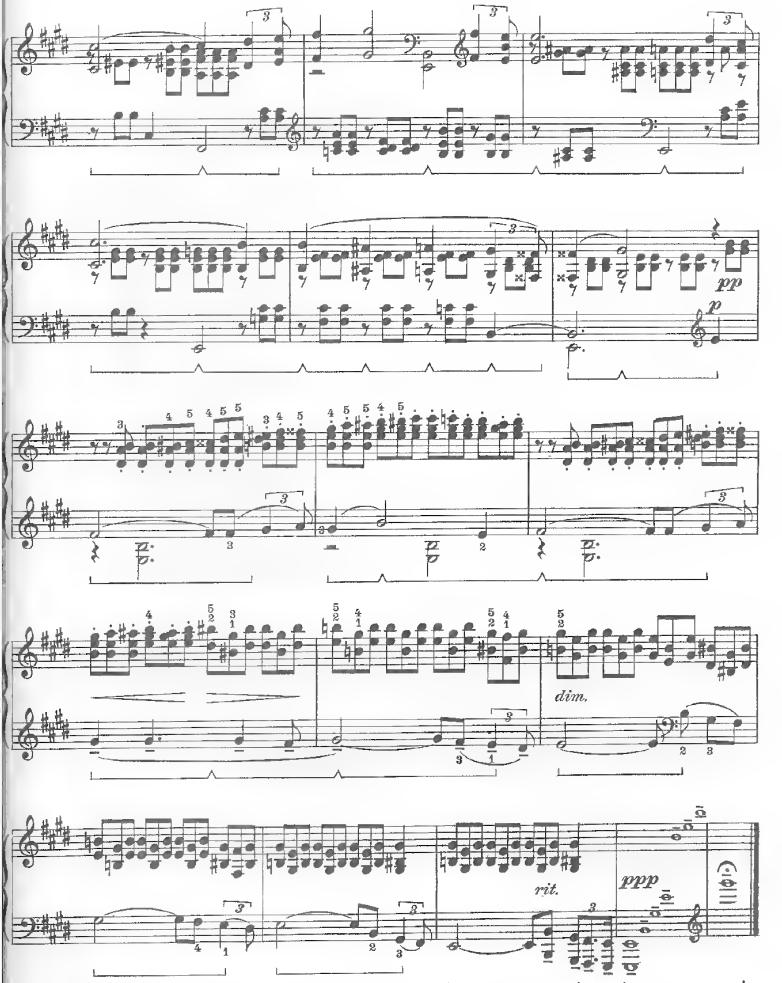
S. Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

Adagio sostenuto



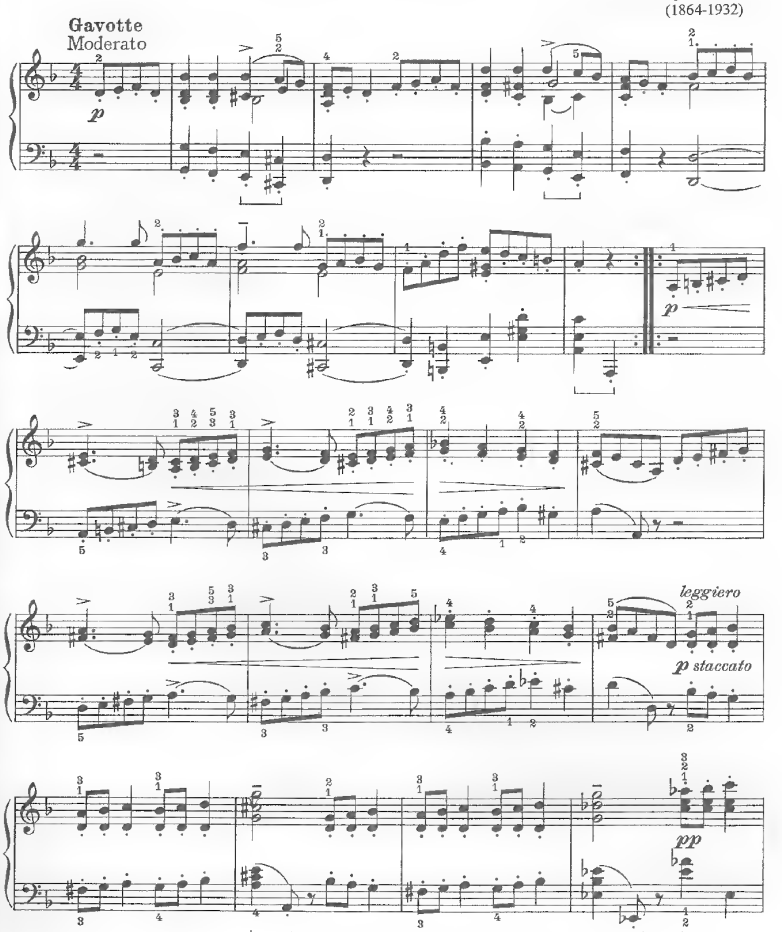

ff
dim.
dim.
mf
pp
cresc.
r.h.

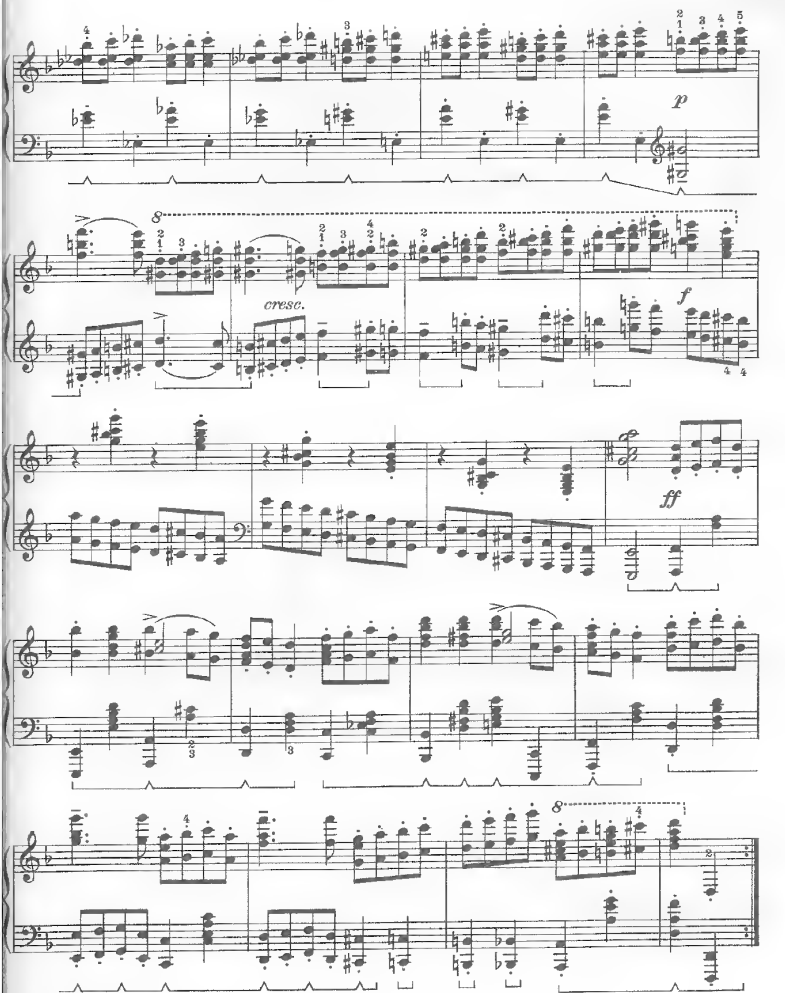

r. h.
cresc.
r. h.
pp
f
mf
p
r. h.
l. h.
p


pp
p
dim.
rit.
ppp

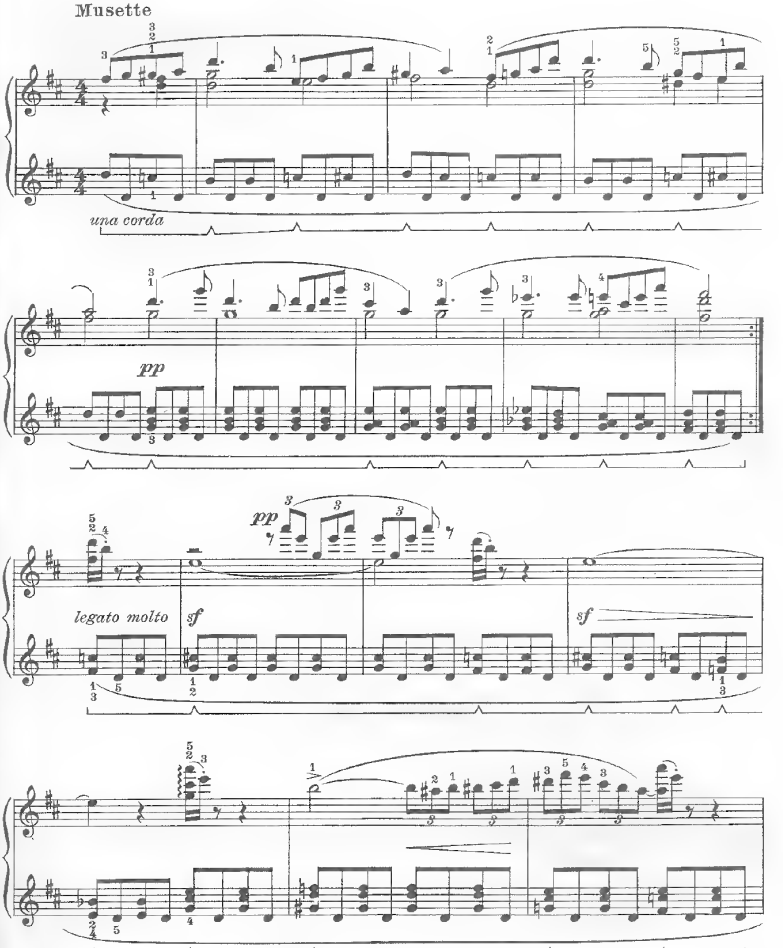
Gavotte and Musette

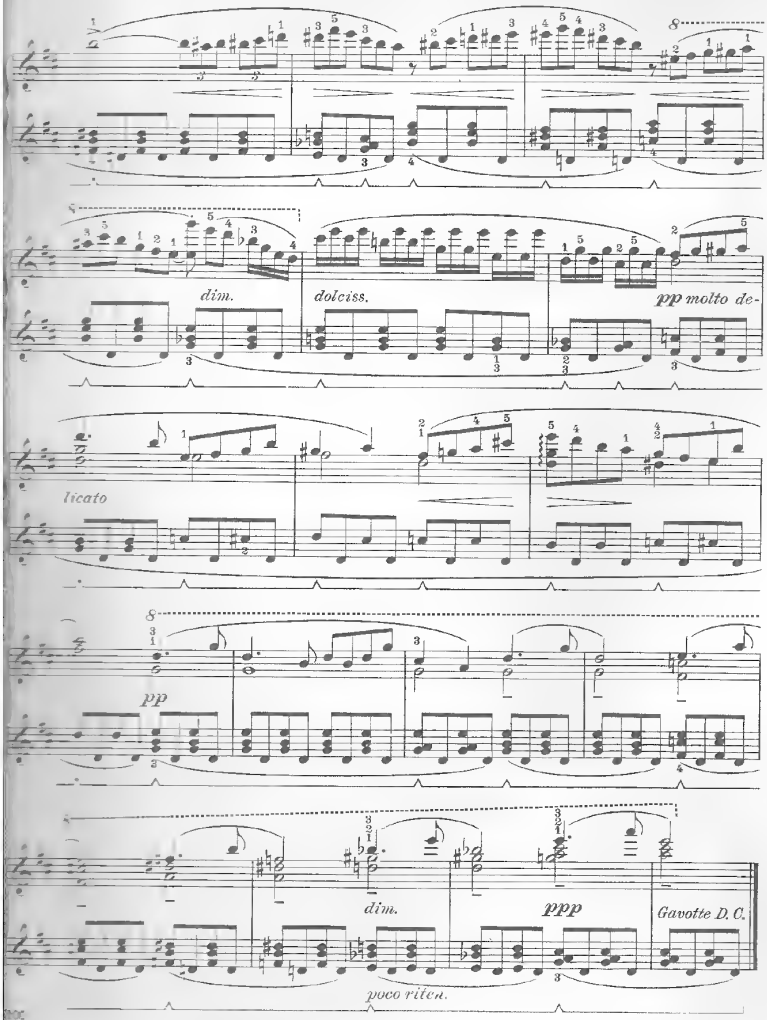
Eugen d' Albert
(1864-1932)




p
8
cresc.
f
ff
8

Musette




dim.
dolciss.
pp molto de-
licato
pp
dim.
ppp
Gavotte D. C.
poco riten.

A PARTIAL LIST OF THE WORKS WITH WHICH STUDENTS SHOULD BECOME FAMILIAR WHILE STUDYING THE FIFTH GRADE BOOK

FROM THE MASTERS

Composer	Title
BACH	Two-Part Inventions
	Partitas, Book 1
	French Suites
	Loure (from 3rd 'Cello Suite)
	Fantasy in C minor
	Gavotte B minor (Saint-Saëns)
BEETHOVEN	Bagatelle, Op. 33, No.1 (E flat)
	Bagatelle, Op. 33, No. 2 (C maj.)
	Bagatelle, Op. 33, No. 6 (D maj.)
	Rondo in C (Lebert)
	Rondo a capriccio, Op. 129 (G maj.)
	Contra Dance
	Ecossaises (Busoni)
	*Sonatas
CHOPIN	*Mazurkas---Nocturnes
	*Polonaises---Preludes—Waltzes
COUPERIN	La Bandoline (Rondo)
	Soeur Monique (Rondo)
DAQUIN	The Cukoo
GLUCK-BRAHMS	Gavotte
HANDEL	Harmonious Blacksmith

Composer	Title
HAYDN	*Sonatas
HUMMEL	Rondo, Op. 11
LISZT	Liebestraum NO. 2 in E
MENDELSSOHN	Praeludium, E minor
	Scherzo in E minor
	Rondo capricfoso
MOZART	Fantasie in D minor
	Pastorale Variée
	*Sonatas
PARADIES	Taccata in A
RAMEAU	Le Tambourin
SCARLATTI	Pastorale
SCHUBERT	Moment Musical, Op. 94, No. 2
	Moment Musical, Op. 94, No. 3
	Impromptu, Op. 90, No. 2
	Impromptu, Op. 90, No. 4
SCHUMANN	Arabeske, Op. 18
	Novelette, Op. 99, No. 3, B minor
	Why? (Warum?)
	Prophet Bird

MODERN COMPOSERS

ALBENIZ	Cordova
	Malagueña
BARGEIL	Suite Op.31
DEBUSSY	Two Arabesques
	Clair de lune
DVORSKY	L'Orient et l'Occident
GODOWSKY	Paradoxical Moods
	Alt-Wien
GRIEG	Wedding Day at Troldhaugen
	Birdling
	Solveig's Song
	Puck
	Nocturne
	To Spring
	From the Carnival
MACDOWELL	Six Poems after Heine
	Witches' Dance

MOSZKOWSKI	Scherzino in F
	Air de Ballet
	Sparks
	Guitarre
PADEREWSKI	Nocturne, Op. 16, No. 4, Bb
	Menuet, Op. 14, No. 1
PALMGREN	Swan
	Birdsong
RACHMANINOFF	Prelude, C sharp minor
	Polichinelle
RAVEL	Pavane (To a dead child)
RUBINSTEIN	Kamennoi Ostrow
SIBELIUS	Romance, Op. 24, No. 9
TSCHAIKOWSKY	June (Barcarolle)
	Troika
	Humoresque
WIENIAWSKI-THOMPSON	Romance

LIGHTER COMPOSITIONS

GODARD	Second Mazurka
	Valse Chromatique
	Venetienne (4th Barcarolle)
	En courant
GRÜNFELD	Romance, Op. 45
GRUTZMACHER	Albumleaf
HELLER	Tarantella, Op. 85, No. 2
ITURBI	Pequena Danza Espanola
LACK	Cabaletta
	Idillo
LASSON	Crescendo
LAVALLÉE	Butterfly
LIADOW	Music Box

LESCHETIZKY	Two Larks
	Octavo Intermezzo
MERKEL	Polonaise Brillante
OLSEN	Butterflies, Op. 50
PIECZONKA	Tarantelle
POLDINI	Dancing Doll
POWELL	Banjo Picker
SCHUTT	Valse, op. 59, No. 2
	Etude Mignon
	Reverie, Op. 34
	Carnival Mignon
SINDING	Rustle of Spring
	Marche Grotesque

*It is intended that the teacher will select such sonatas, or movements from sontatas, by Beethoven, Mozart and Haydn as seem fitted to the advancement of the individual student. This also applies to the works of Chopin.